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o. 5. 6 1540 Webster (J.) and W. Rowley, A Cure for a Cuckold, a pleasant Comedy. *Postmarked Dec. 9. 1858.* 16

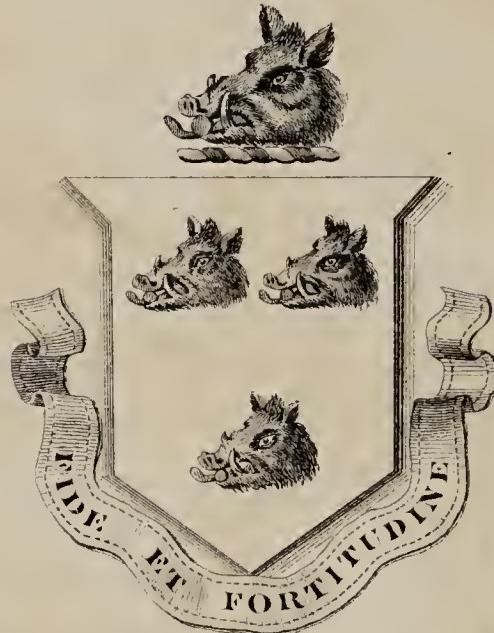
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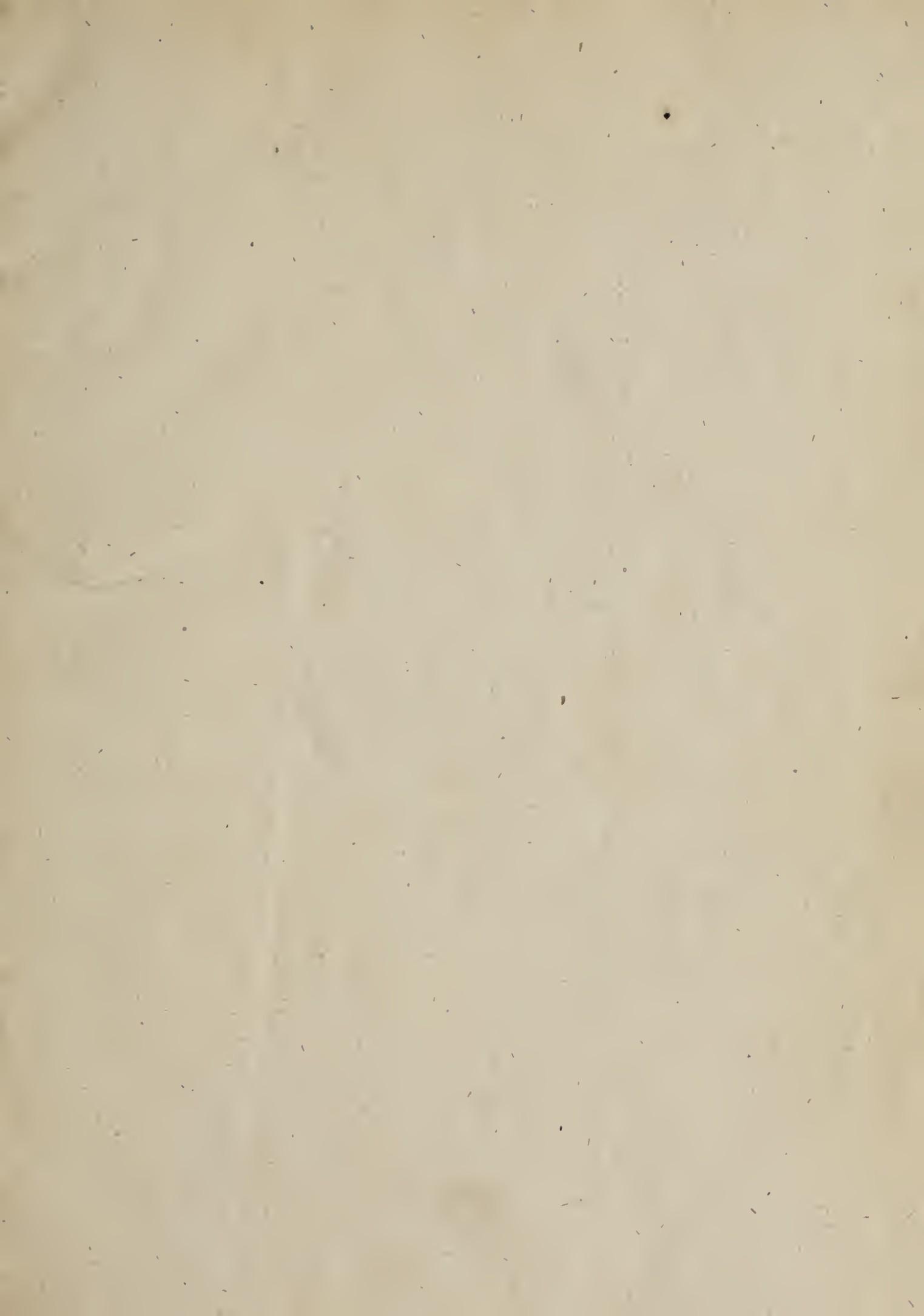


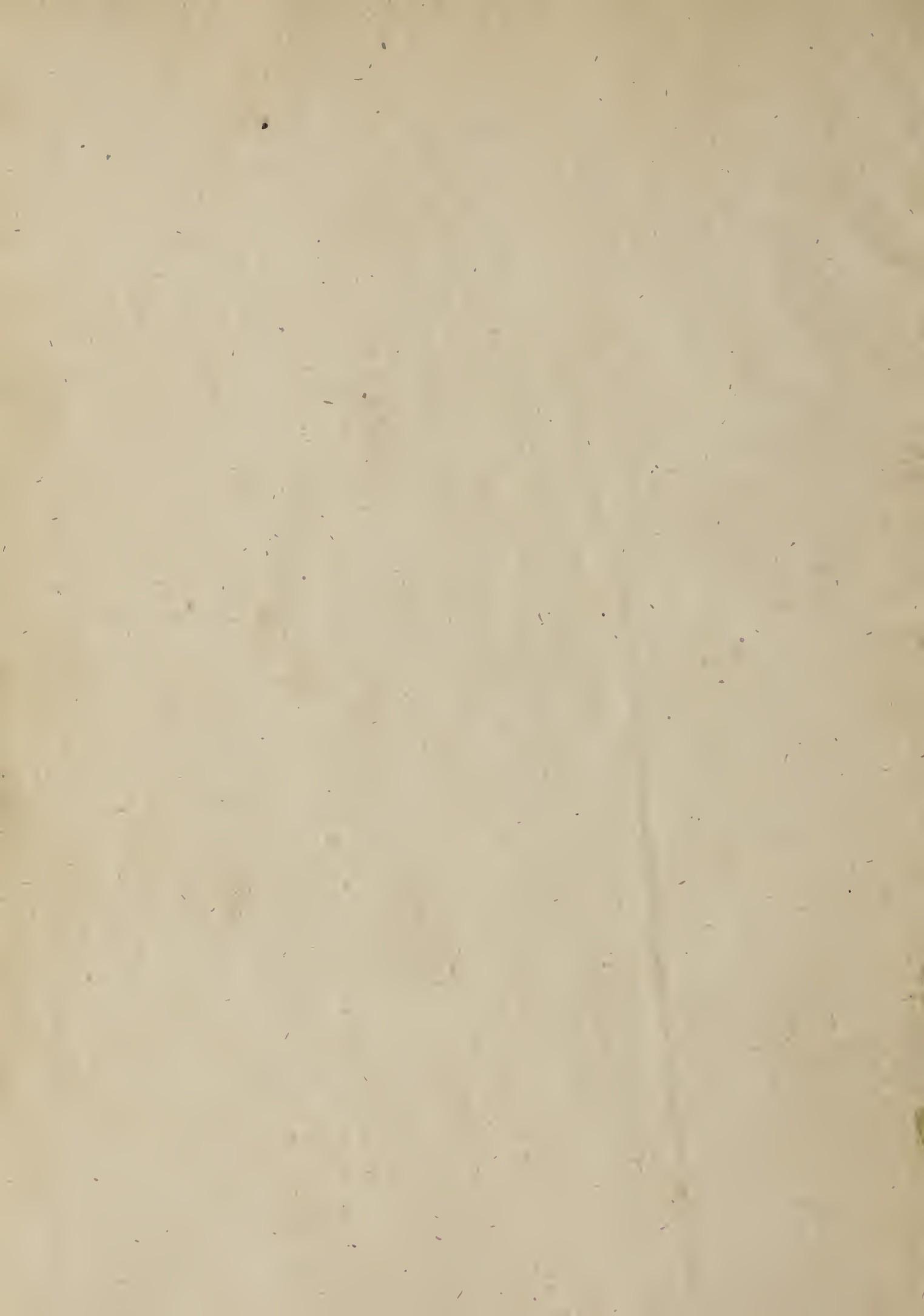
Thomas Pennant . Barton.

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A
CURE
FOR A
CUCKOLD.
A PLEASANT
COMEDY,

As it hath been several times Acted
with great Applause.

Written by JOHN VVEBSTER and
VVILLIAM ROWLEY.

Placere Cupio.

London, Printed by Tho. Johnson, and are to be sold by Francis Kirkman, at his Shop at the Sign of John Fletchers Head, over against the Angel-Inne, on the Back-side of St. Clements, without Temple-Bar. 1661;

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May, 1873.

The Stationer, to the Judicious Reader.

Gentlemen,

IT was not long since I was onely a Book-Reader, and not a Book-seller, which Quality (my former Employment somewhat failing, and I being unwilling to be idle) I have now lately taken on me. It hath been my fancy and delight (ere since I knew any thing) to converse with Books; and the pleasure I have taken in those of this nature, (viz. Plays) hath bin so extraordinary, that it hath bin much to my cost; for I have been (as we term it) a Gatherer of Plays for some years, and I am confident I have more of several sorts than any man in England, Book-seller, or other: I can at any time shew 700 in number, which is within a small matter all that were ever printed. Many of these I have several times over, and intend as I sell, to purchase more; All, or any of which, I shall be ready either to sell or lend to you upon reasonable Considerations.

In order to the increasing of my Store, I have now this Tearn printed and published three, viz. This called A Cure for a Cuckold, and another called, The Thracian Wonder; and the third called, Gammer Gurtons Needle. Two of these three were never printed, the third, viz. Gammer Gurtons Needle, hath bin formerly printed, but it is almost an hundred years since. As for this Play, I need not speak any thing in its Commendation, the Authors names, Webster and Rowley, are (to knowing men) sufficient to declare its worth: several persons remember the Acting of it, and say that it then pleased generally well; and let me tell you, in my judgement it is an excellenter old Play. The Expedient of Curing a Cuckold (after the maner set down in this Play) hath bin tried to my knowledge, and therefore I may say Probatum est. I should, I doubt, be too tedious, or else I would say somewhat in defence of this, and in Commendation of Plays in general, but I question not but you have read what abler Pens than mine have writ in their Vindication. Gentlemen, I hope you will so encourage me in my beginnings, that I may be induced to proceed to do you service, and that I may frequently have occasion in this nature, to subscribe my self

Your Servant,
Francis Kirkman.



Dramatis Personæ.

VVoodroff, a Justice of the Peace, Father to Annabel.

Franckford a Merchant, Brother in Law to Woodroff.

Lessingham a Gentleman, in love with Clare.

Bonvile a Gentleman, the Bridegroom and Husband to Annabel.

Raymond,

Eustace,

Lyonel, and

Grover,

Rochfield, a young Gentleman, and a Thief.

Compass, a Sea-man.

Pettifog, and

Dodge, two Attorneys.

A Councillor.

Two Clients.

Two Boys.

A Saylor.

Lace Wife to Franckford, and Sister to Woodroff.

Annabel the Bride, and Wife to Bonvile.

Clare, Lessingham's Mississ.

Urse, Wife to Compass.

Nurse.

A Waiting-woman.



Gallants invited to the Wedding.



A CURE for a CUCKOLD.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Lessingham and Clare.

Less. **T**HIS is a place of feasting and of joy, and as in Triumphs and Ovations here, nothing save State and pleasure.

Clare. 'Tis confess.

Less. A day of Mirth and solemn Jubile.

Clare. For such as can be merry.

Less. A happy Nuptial, since a like pair of Fortunes suitable, equality in Birth, parity in years, and in affection no way different, are this day sweetly coupled.

Clare. 'Tis a Marriage.

Less. True Lady, and a noble president me thinks for us to follow : why should these out-strip us in our loves, that have not yet out-gone us in our time.

If we thus loose our best, and not to be recovered hours unprofitably spent, we shall be held meer Trewants in Love's school.

Clare. That's a study in which I never shall ambition have to become graduate.

Less. Lady, you are sad : this Jovial Meeting puts me in a spirit to be made such. We two are Guests invited, and meet by purpose, not by accident ; where's then a place more opportunely fit, in which we may solicit our own Loves, than before this example ?

Clare. In a word, I purpose not to marry

Less. By your favor, for as I ever to this present hour have studied your observance, so from henceforth I now will study plainness, I have loved you beyond my self, mis-spended for your sake many a fair hour, which might have been employed to pleasure, or to profit, have neglected duty to them from whom my being came, my parents ; but my hopeful studies most. I have stol'n time from all my choice delights, and robb'd my self,

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self, thinking to enrich you. Matches I have had offered, some have told me as fair, as rich, I never thought 'em so; and lost all these in hope to finde out you, resolve me then for Christian charity. Think you an Answer of that frozen nature is a sufficient satisfaction for so many more then needful services?

Clare. I have said, Sir.

Less. Whence might this distaste arise? Be at least so kinde to perfect me in that: Is it of some dislike lately conceived of this my person, which perhaps may grow from calumny and scandal? if not that, some late received Melancholy in you: if neither, your perverse and peevish will, to which I most imply it:

Clare. Be it what it can, or may be, thus it is,
And with this Answer pray rest satisfied.
In all these travells, windings, and indentes,
Paths, and by-paths which many have sought out,
There's but one onely road, and that alone
To my fruition; which who so findes out,
'Tis like he may enjoy me: but that failing,
I ever am mine own.

Less. Oh name it, Sweet. I am already in a Labyrinth until you guide me out.

Clare. Ile to my Chamber,
May you be pleased, unto your mis-spent time
To adde but some few minutes. By my Maid
You shall hear further from me.

Exit.

Less. Ile attend you.
What more can I desire, than be resolv'd
Of such a long suspence. Here's now the period
Of much expectation.

Raym. What? you alone
Retired to privacy,
Of such a goodly confluence, all prepared
To grace the present Nuptials?

Enter Raymond, Eustace, Lyonel,
and Grover, Gallants.

Less. I have heard some say, men are ne're less alone, then when alone, such power hath meditation.

Eust. Oh these choice Beauties that are this day assembled!
But of all, fair Mistriss *Clare*, the Bride excepted till, she bears away the prize.

Lyon.

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Lyon. And worthily ; for, setting off her present melancholly, she is without taxation.

Grov. I conceive the cause of her so sudden discontent.

Raym. 'Tis far out of my way.

Grov. Ile speak it then : In all estates, professions, or degrees in Arts or Sciences, there is a kinde of Emulation ; likewise so in this : There's a Maid this day married, a choice Beauty. Now Mrs. Clare, a Virgin of like Age , and Fortunes correspondent, apprehending time lost in her that's in another gained, may upon this. For who knows wemens thoughts grow into this deep sadness?

Raym. Like enough.

Less. You are pleasant, Gentlemen,
Or else perhaps, though I know many have pursued her Love,

Grov. (And you amongst the rest) with pardon Sir,
Yet she might cast some more peculiar eye
On some that not respects her,

Enter Wayting-
woman.

Less. That's my fear which you now make
your sport.

Wom. A Letter, Sir.

Less. From whom?

Wom. My Mistriss.

Less. She has kept her promise, and I will read it, though I in the same know my own death included.

Wom. Fare you well, Sir.

Exit.

Less. Prove all thy friends, finde out the best and nearest,

Kill for my sake that Friend that loves thee dearest.

Her servant, nay her hand and character,
All meeting in my ruine ! Read agen,

Prove all thy Friends, finde out the best and nearest,

Kill for my sake that Friend that loves the dearest.

And what might that one be ? 'Tis a strange difficulty,
And it will ask much councel.

Exit Less.

Raym. Lessingham hath left us on the sudden.

East. Sure the occasion was of that Letter sent him.

Lyon. It may be it was some Challenge.

Grov. Challenge, never dream it :
Are such things sent by women ?

Enter Woodroff, Anabel,
Bonvile, Franckford,
Luce, and Nurse.

Raym. 'Twere an Heresie
To conceive but such a thought.

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Lyon. Tush, all the difference
Begot this day, must be at night decided
Betwixt the Bride and Bridegroom. Here both come.

Wood. What did you call the Gentlemen we met
But now in some distraction ?

Bon. *Lessingham* : A most approv'd and noble friend of mine,
and one of our prime Guests.

Wood. He seemed to me
Somewhat in minde distemper'd. What concern'd
Those private humors ours so publick Mirth
In such a time of Revels ? Mistriss *Clare*,
I miss her too. Why Gallants, have you suffered her
Thus to be lost amongst you ?

Anna. Dinner done, unknown to any, she retir'd her self.

Wood. Sick of the *Maid* perhaps; because she sees
You Mistriss Bride, her School- and Play-fellow
So suddenly turned Wife.

Franck. 'Twas shrewdly guest.

Wood. Go finde her out : Fie Gentlemen, within
The Musick playes unto the silent walls,
And no man there to grace it : when I was young,
At such a Meeting I have so bestir'd me,
Till I have made the pale Green-fickness Girls
Blush like the Rubie, and drop pearls apace
Down from their Ivory fore-heads : In those days
I have cut Capers thus high. Nay, in Gentlemen,
And single out the Ladies.

Raym. Well advised. Nay Mrs. Bride, you shall along with
us ; for without you all's nothing.

Anna. Willingly, with Mr. Bridegrooms leave.

Bon. Oh my best Joy, this day I am your servant.

Wood. True, this day ; she his, her whole life after, so it should
be : onely this day a Groom to do her service, for which the full
remainder of his age he may write Master. I have done it yet,
and so I hope still shall do. Sister *Luce*, may I presume my bro-
ther *Franckford* can say as much, and truly ?

Luce. Sir, he may, I freely give him leave.

Wood. Observe that brother, she freely gives you leave ;

But

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But who gives leave, the Master or the servant?

Franck. You're pleasant, and it becomes you well, but this day most; that having but one Daughter, have bestowed her to your great hope and comfort.

Wood. I have one: would you could say so, Sister; but your barrenness hath given your husband freedom, if he please, to seek his pastime elsewhere.

Luce. Well, well brother, though you may taunt me that have never yet been blest with issue, spare my husband pray, for he may have a By-blow, or an Heir that you never heard of.

Franck. Oh fie wife, make not my fault too publick.

Luce. Yet himself keep within compass.

Franck. If you love me, Sweet. Luce. Nay I have done.

Wood. But if he have not, Wench, I would he had, the hurt I wish you both. Prithee, thine ear a little.

Nurse. Your boy grows up, and 'tis a chopping Lad,
A man even in the Cradle. Fran. Softly Nurse:

Nurse. One of the forwardst infants, how it will crow
And chirrup like a Sparrow! I fear shortly it will breed teeth;
you must provide him therefore a Corral; with a Whistle and a
Chain. Fran. He shall have any thing.

Nurse. He's now quite out of Blankets.

Fran. There's a Piece, provide him what he wants, onely
good Nurse prithee at this time be silent.

Nurse. A Charm to binde any Nurses tongue that's living.

Wood. Come, we are mist among the younger Frye,
Gravity oft-times becomes the sports of youth, especially
At such Solemnities, and it were sin
Not in our Age to show what we have bin.

Exeunt.

Enter Lessingham sad, with a Letter in his hand.

Less. Amicitia nibil dedit natura maius necrarius,
So saith my Author. If then powerful Nature in all her boun-
ties showed upon mankinde, found none more rare and precious
than this one we call Friendship, oh to what a Monster would
this trans-shape me, to be made that he to violate such goodness!
To kill any had been a sad Injunction, but a Friend! nay, of all
Friends the most approved! A Task, hell fill this day could ne-
ver parallel: And yet this woman ha's a power of me beyond all

ver-

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vertue, vertue, almost grace. What might her hidden purpose be in this? unless she apprehend some fantasie that no such thing ha's being: — and as kinred and claims to Crowns are worn out of the world, so the name Friend? 'T may be 'twas her conceit. I have tryed those that have professed much for coin; nay sometimes slighter courtesies, yet found 'em cold enough, — so perhaps she, which makes her thus opinion'd. — If in the former, and therefore better days, 'twas held so rare, who knows but in these last and worser times, it may be now with justice banisht th' earth. I'm full of thoughts, and this my troubled brest distemper'd with a thousand fantasies, something I must resolve. I'le first make proof if such a thing there be; which having found, 'Twixt Love and Friendship 'twill be a brave Fight, To prove in man which claims the greatest right.

Enter Raymond, Eustace, Lyonel, and Grover.

Raym. What, Master Lessingham!

You that were wont to be compos'd of mirth,
All spirit and fire. — Alacrity it self, like the lustre of a late
bright shining Sun, now wrapt in clouds and darkness!

Lyon. Prithee be merry,
Thy dulness fads the half part of the house,
And deads that spirit which thou wast wont to quicken,
And half spent to give Life too.

Less. Gentlemen, such as have cause for sport, I shall wish ever
To make of it the present benefit
While it exists. — Content is still short breathed,
When it was mine I did so. If now yours,
I pray make your best use on't.

Lyon. Riddles and Paradoxes:
Come, come, some Crotchers come into thy pate,
And I will know the cause on't.

Grov. So will I, or I protest ne're leave thee.

Eust. 'Tis a business proper to my self, — one that concerns
no second person.

Grov. How's that? not a friend?

Less. Why, is there any such?

Grov. Do you question that? what do you take me for?

Eust. I Sir, or me? 'Tis many moneths ago since we betwixt

us

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us interchang'd that name, and of my part ne're broken:

Lyon. Troth, nor mine.

Raym. If you make question of a Friend, I pray
Number not me the last in your accompt,
That would be crown'd in your opinion first.

Less. You all speak nobly. But amongst you all
Can such a one be found?

Raym. Not one amongst us, but would be proud to wear the
character of noble Friendship. In the name of which, and of all
us here present, I intreat, expose to us the grief that troubles you.

Less. I shall, and briefly: If ever Gentleman sunk beneath
scandal, or his reputation never to be recovered, suffered, and
for want of one whom I may call a Friend, then mine is now in
danger.

Raym. I'll redeem't, though with my lifes dear hazard.

Eust. I pray Sir, be to us open-breasted.

Less. Then 'tis thus: There is to be performed a Monamachy-
Combat, or Duel, Time, Place, and Weapon agreed betwixt
us. Had it toucht my self, and my self onely, I had then been
happy; but I by composition am engag'd to bring with me my
Second, and he too, not as the Law of Combat is, to stand aloof
and see fair play, bring off his friend, but to engage his person;
both must fight, and either of them dangerous.

Eust. Of all things, I do not like this fighting.

Less. Now Gentlemen, of this so great a courtesie
I am at this instant meerly destitute. Raym. The time.

Less. By eight a clock to morrow.

Raym. How unhappily things may fall out, I am just at that
hour upon some late conceived Discontents, to atone me to my
father, otherwise of all the rest you had commanded me your
Second, and your Servant.

Lyon. Pray the Place? Less. Callis-Sands.

Lyon. It once was fatal to a friend of mine, and a near kins-
man, for which I vowed then, and deeply too, never to see that
ground: But if it had been elsewhere, one of them had before
mine been worms-meat.

Grov. What's the weapon? Less. Single-sword.

Grov. Of all that you could name,

A thing

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A thing I never practis'd, — Had it been Rapier — or that, and Poniard, where men use rather sleight than force, I had been then your Man ; being young, I strained the sinews of my arm, since then to me 'twas never serviceable.

Eust. In troth Sir, had it been a money-matter, I could have stood your friend, but as for fighting I was ever out at that.

Exeunt Gallants.

Leff. Well, farewell Gentlemen, But where's the Friend in all this ? tush, she's wise, And knows there's no such thing beneath the moon : I now applaud her judgement.

Enter Bon-vile.

Bon. Why how now friend, this Discontent which now Is so unseason'd, makes me question what I ne're durst doubt before, your Love to me, Doth it proceed from Envy of my Bliss Which this day crowns me with ? Or have you been A secret Rival in my happiness ? And grieve to see me owner of those Joys, Which you could wish your own ?

Leff. Banish such thoughts, Or you shall wrong the truest faithful Friendship Man e're could boast of, oh mine honor, Sir, 'Tis that which makes me wear this brow of sorrow : Were that free from the power of Calumny. But pardon me, that being now a dying Which is so near to man, if part we cannot With pleasant looks.

Bon. Do but speak the burthen, and I protest to take it off from you, and lay it on my self.

Leff. 'Twere a request, impudence without blushing could not ask, it bears with it such injury.

Bon. Yet must I know't.

Leff. Receive it then. — But I intreat you sir, not to imagine that I apprehend a thought to further my intent by you, from you 'tis least suspected. — 'Twas my fortune to entertain a Quarrel with a Gentleman, the Field betwixt us challeng'd, place and time, and these to be performed not without Seconds. I have rely'd on many seeming friends, but cannot bless my memory

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mory with one dares venter in my Quarrel.

Bon. Is this all?

Less. It is enough to make all temperature
Convert to fury.— Sir, my Reputation
(The life and soul of Honor) is at stake,
In danger to be lost.— The word of Coward
Still printed in the name of Lessingham.

Bon. Not while there is a Bonvile.— May I live poor,
And die despised, not having one sad friend
To wait upon my Hearse, if I survive
The ruine of that Honor.— Sir, the time?

Less. Above all spare me— for that once known,
You'll cancel this your promise, and unsay
Your friendly proffer.— Neither can I blame you,
Had you confirmed it with a thousand Oathes,
The Heavens would look with mercy, not with justice
On your offence, should you enfringe 'em all.
Soon after Sun-rise upon Callis-sands,
To morrow we should meet— now to deferre
Time one half hour, I should but forfeit all.
But Sir, of all men living, this alas
Concerns you least; — For shall I be the man
To rob you of this nights felicity,
And make your Bride a Widow, — her soft bed
No witness of those joys this night expects?

Bon. I still preferre my friend before my pleasure,
Which is not lost for ever— but adjourned
For more mature employment.

Less. Will you go then? Bon. I am resolved I will.

Less. And instantly? Bon. With all the speed celerity can make.

Less. You do not weigh those inconveniences this Action
meets with.— Your departure hence will breed a strange distra-
ction in your friends, distrust of Love in your fair virtuous Bride,
whose eyes perhaps may never more be blest with your dear sight:
since you may meet a grave, and that not amongst your noble An-
cestors, but amongst strangers, almost enemies.

Bon. This were enough to shake a weak resolve,
It moves not me. Take horse as secretly

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As you well may: my Groom shall make mine ready
With all speed possible, unknown to any. Enter Annabel.

Less. But Sir, the Bride.

An. Did you not see the Key that's to unlock my Carckonet
and Bracelets? Now in troth I am afraid 'tis lost.

Bon. No Sweet, I ha't: I found it lye at random in your
Chamber, and knowing you would miss it, laid it by: 'tis safe I
warrant you.

An. Then my fear's past: but till you give it back, my Neck
and Arms are still your Prisoners.

Bon. But you shall finde they have a gentle Jaylor.

An. So I hope. Within y're much enquired of.

Bon. Sweet, I follow. Dover?

Less. Yes, that's the place.

Bon. If you be there before me, hire a Barque, I shall not fail
to meet you.

Exeunt.

Less. Was ever known a man so miserably blest as I? I have
have no sooner found the greatest good, man in this pilgrimage of
Life can meet, but I must make the womb where 'twas concei-
ved, the Tomb to bury it, and the first hour it lives,
The last it must breath? Yet there's a Fate
That sways and governs above womans hate.

Exit.

Explicit. Act. I.

Actus secundus. Scena prima.

Enter Rockfield a young Gentleman.

Rock. A Younger Brother? 'tis a poor Calling (though not
unlawful) very hard to live on; the elder fool inhe-
rits all the Lands, and we that follow Legacies of Wit, and get
'em when we can too. Why should Law (if we be lawful and
legitimate) leave us without an equal divident? Or why com-
pels it not our Fathers else to cease from getting, when they
want to give? No sure, our Mothers will ne're agree to that,
they love to groan, although the Gallows echo and groan to-
gether for us. From the first we travel forth, t'other's our jour-
neys end. I must forward, to beg is out of my way, and bor-
rowing

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rowing is out of date : The old road, the old high-way 't must
be, and I am in't , the place will serve for a yong beginner , for
this is the first day I set ope shop ; success then sweet Laverna ,
I have heard that Thieves adore thee for a Deity. *Enter Annabel*
I would not purchase by thee, but to eat,
And 'tis too churlish to deny me meat.
Soft, here may be a booty.

and a servant.

An. Hors'd, sayest thou ?

Ser. Yes Mistriss, with Lessingham.

An. Alack, I know not what to doubt or fear, I know not well
whether't be well or ill : but sure it is no custom for the Groom
to leave his Bride upon the Nuptial day. I am so yong and igno-
rant a Scholar, yes, and it proves so : I talk away perhaps that
might be yet recovered. Prithee run, the fore-path may advan-
tage thee to meet 'em , or the Ferry which is not two miles be-
fore, may trouble 'em until thou comest in ken, and if thou dost,
prithee enforce thy voice to overtake thine eyes , cry out, and
crave for me but one word 'fore his departure. I will not stay
him, say, beyond his pleasure ; nor rudely ask the cause, if he be
willing to keep it from me. Charge him by all the love. But I
stay thee too long. Run, run.

Ser. If I had wings I would spread 'em now, Mistriss. *Exit.*

An. Ile make the best speed after that I can,
Yet I am not well acquainted with the path:
My fears I fear me will misguide me too. *Exit.*

Roch. There's good moveables I perceive, what ere the ready
Coin be , who ever owns her, she's mine now: the next ground
has a most pregnant hollow for the purpose. *Exit.*

Enter servant running over. Enter Annabel, after her Rochfield.

An. I'm at a doubt already where I am.

Roch. Ile help you, Mistriss, well overtaken.

An. Defend me goodness. What are you ? *Roch.* A man.

An. An honest man, I hope.

Roch. In some degrees hot, not altogether cold,
So far as rank poison , yet dangerous
As I may be drest : I am an honest thief.

An. Honest and Thief hold small affinity , I never heard they
were a kin before, pray Heaven I finde it now.

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Roch. I tell you my name.

An. Then honest thief, since you have taught me so, for Ile enquire no other, use me honestly.

Roch. Thus then Ile use you : First then to prove me honest, I will not violate your Chastity, (that's no part yet of my profession) be you Wife or Virgin.

An. I am both, Sir.

Roch. This then it seems should be your Wedding-day, and these the hours of interim to keep you in that double state. Come then, Ile be brief, for Ile not hinder your desired *Hymen*: You have about you some superfluous Toys, which my lanck hungry pockets would contrive with much more profit, and more privacy ; you have an idle Chain which keeps your Neck à Prisoner, a Mannacle I take it, about your wrist too. If these prove Emblems of the combined Hemp to halter mine, the Fates take their pleasure, these are set down to be your Ransom, and there the Thief is proved.

An. I will confess both, and the last forget ; you shall be onely honest in this deed. Pray you take it, I intreat you to it, and then you steal 'em not.

Roch. You may deliver 'em.

An. Indeed I cannot : if you observe, Sir, they are both lock'd about me, and the Key I have not ; happily you are furnish't with some instrument, that may unloose 'em.

Roch. No in troth, Lady, I am but a Fresh-man, I never read further than this Book you see, And this very day is my beginning too : These picking Laws I am to study yet.

An. Oh, do not show me that, Sir, 'tis too frightful : Good, hurt me not, for I do yield 'em freely : Use but your hands, perhaps their strength will serve To tear 'em from me without much detriment, Somewhat I will endure.

Roch. Well, sweet Lady, y' are the best Patient for a young Physician, that I think e're was practis'd on. Ile use you as gently as I can, as I'm an honest Thief. No ? wilt not do ? do I hurt you, Lady ? *An.* Not much, Sir.

Roch. I'd be loath at all, I cannot do't.

She draws his sword

An.

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An. Nay then you shall not, Sir. You a Thief,
And guard your self no better? No further read?
Yet out in your own book? A bad Clerk, are you not?

Roch. I by Saint Nicholas, Lady, sweet Lady.

An. Sir, I have now a Masculine vigor, and will redeem my self with purchase too. What money have you?

Roch. Not a cross, by this foolish hand of mine.

An. No money. 'Twere pity then to take this from thee: I know thou'l use me ne're the worse for this, take it agen, I know not how to use it: A frown had taken't from me, which thou hadst not. And now hear and believe me, on my knees I make the Protestation, Forbear to take what violence and danger must dissolve, if I forgo 'em now, I do assure you would not strike my head off for my Chain, nor my hand for this, how to deliver 'em otherwise I know not; Accompany me back unto my house, 'tis not far off, by all the Vows which this day I have tyed unto my wedded husband, the honor yet equal with my Cradle purifie (if you will tax me) to the hoped joys the blessings of the bed, posterity, or what ought else by woman may be pledg'd, I will deliver you in ready Coin, the full and dearest esteem of what you crave.

Roch. Ha, ready money is the prize I look for, it walks without suspition any where, when Chains and Jewels may be stayed and call'd before the Constable: But,

An. But? Can you doubt? You saw I gave you my advantage up: Did you e're think a woman to be true?

Roch. Thought 's free. I have heard of some few, Lady, Very few indeed.

An. Will you adde one more to your belief?

Roch. They were fewer than the Articles of my Belief; therefore I have room for you, and will believe you. Stay: you'l ransom your Jewels with ready Coin, so may you do, and then discover me.

An. Shall I reiterate the Vows I made
To this iunction, or new ones coyn?

Roch. Neither, Ile trust you: if you do destroy a Thief that never yet did Robbery, then farewell I, and mercy fall upon me. I knew one once fifteen years Courtier, owl'd, and he was buried

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ried e're he took a Bribe: it may be my case in the worser way.
Come, you know your path back.

An. Yes, I shall guide you.

Roch. Your arm, Ile lead with greater dread than will,
Nor do you fear, tho in thiefs handling still.

Exeunt.

Enter two Boys, one with a childe in his arms.

1 Boy. I say 'twas fair play.

2 Boy. To snatch up stakes: I say you should not say so, if the
childe were out of mine arms.

1 Boy. I then thou'dst lay about like a man, but the childe will
not be out of thine arms this five years, and then thou hast a pren-
tiship to serve to a boy afterwards. Enter Compass.

2 Boy. So sir, you know you have the advantage of me.

1 Boy. I'm sure you have the odds of me, you are two to one.
But soft Jack, who comes here? if a Point will make us friends,
we'll not fall out.

2 Boy. Oh the pity, 'tis Gaffer Compass! They said he was
dead three years ago.

1 Boy. Did not he dance the Hobby-horse in Hackney-Morrice
once?

2 Boy. Yes, yes, at Green-goose Fayr, as honest and as poor a man.

Comp. Black-wall, sweet Black-wall, do I see thy white cheeks
again? I have brought some Brine from sea for thee: tears that
might be tyed in a True-love Knot, for they'r fresh salt indeed.
Oh beautiful Black-wall! if Urse my wife be living to this day,
though she die to morrow, sweet Fates!

2 Boy. Alas, let's put him out of his dumps for pity sake:
Welcome home, Gaffer Compass, welcome home, Gaffer.

Comp. My pretty youths, I thank you. Honest Jack! what a
little man art thou grown since I saw thee? Thou hast got a child
since, methinks.

2 Boy. I am fain to keep it, you see, whosoever got it, Gaffer:
it may be another mans case as well as mine.

Comp. Say'st true, Jack: and whose pretty knave is it?

2 Boy. One that I mean to make a younger brother if he live
to't, Gaffer. But I can tell you news: You have a brave Boy of
your own wifes: oh 'tis a shot to this pig.

Comp. Have I Jack? Ile ow thee a dozen of Points for this news

2 Boy.

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2 Boy. Oh 'tis a chopping Boy ! it cannot chuse you know, Gaffer, it was so long a breeding.

Comp. How long, Jack ?

2 Boy. You know 'tis four year ago since you went to sea, and your childe is but a Quarter old yet.

Comp. What plaguy boys are bred now adays ?

1 Boy. Pray Gaffer, how long may a childe be breeding before 'tis born ?

Comp. That is as things are and prove, childe ; the soyl has a great hand in't too , the Horizon, and the Cilme ; these things you'l understand when you go to sea. In some parts of London hard by, you shall have a Bride married to day , and brought to Bed within a moneth after , sometimes within three weeks , a fortnight.

1 Boy. Oh horrible.

Comp. True as I tell you Lads : in another place you shall have a couple of Drones, do what they can, shift Lodgings, Beds, Bed-fellows, yet not a childe in ten years. 2 Boy. Oh pitiful.

Comp. Now it varies agen by that time you come at Wapping, Radcliff, Lymhouse, and here with us at Black-wall , our chilrden come uncertainly, as the winde serves : sometimes here we are supposed to be away three or four year together, 'tis nothing so ; we are at home and gone agen , when no body knows on'e : if you'l believe me, I have been at Surrat as this day , I have taken the Long-boat (a fair Gale with me) been here a bed with my wife by twelve a Clock at night , up and gone agen i'th morning and no man the wiser, if you'l believe me.

2 Boy. Yes, yes Gaffer, I have thought so many times that you or some body else have been at home , I lye at next wall, and I have heard a noise in your chamber all night long.

Comp. Right, why that was I, yet thou never saw'st me.

2 Boy. No indeed, Gaffer.

Comp. No, I warrant thee , I was a thousand leagues off'e're thou wert up. But Jack, I have been loath to ask all this while for discomforting my self, how does my wife ? is she living ?

2 Boy. Oh never better, Gaffer, never so lusty, and truly she wears better clothes than she was wont in your days , especially on Holidays , fair Gowns , brave Petticoats , and fine Smocks, they say that have seen 'em ; and some of the neighbors reports

that

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that they were taken up at London.

Comp. Like enough: they must be paid for, Jack:

2 Boy. And good reason, Gaffer.

Comp. Well Jack, thou shalt have the honor on't, go tell my wife the joyful tidings of my return.

2 Boy. That I will, for she heard you were dead long ago. *Exit*

1 Boy. Nay sir, He be as forward as you, by your leave. *Exit*.

Comp. Well wife, if I be one of the Livery, I thank thee, The Horners are a great Company, there may be An Alderman amongst us one day, 'tis but changing Our Copy, and then we are no more to be called By our old Brother-hood.

Enter Compass his wife.

Wife. Oh my sweet Compass, art thou come agen?

Comp. Oh Urse, give me leave to shed, the fountain of Love Will have their course; though I cannot sing at first sight, Yet I can cry before I see. I am new come into the world, And children cry before they laugh, a fair while.

Wife. And so thou art, sweet Compass, new born indeed; for Rumor laid thee out for dead long since, I never thought to see this face agen. I heard thou wert div'd to th' bottom of the sea, and taken up a Lodging in the Sands, never to come to Black-wall agen.

Comp. I was going indeed wife, but I turn'd back: I heard an ill report of my neighbors, Sharks and Sword-fishes, and the like, whose companies I did not like: come kiss my tears now sweet Urse, sorrow begins to ebb.

Wife. A thousand times welcome home, sweet Compass.

Comp. An Ocean of thanks, and that will hold 'em: and Urse, how goes all at home? or cannot all go yet? Lanck still? will't never be full Sea at our Wharf?

Wife. Alas, husband.

Comp. A lass or a lad, wench, I should be glad of both: I did look for a pair of Compasses before this day.

Wife. And you from home?

Comp. I from home? why though I be from home, and other of our neighbors from home, it is not fit all should be from home, so the town might be left desolate, and our neighbors of Bone might come further from the Itacus, and inhabit here.

Wife.

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Wife. I'm glad y'are merry, sweet husband.

Comp. Merry? nay, Ile be merrier yet, why should I be sorry? I hope my boy's well, is he not? I lookest for another by this time.

Wife. What boy, husband?

Comp. What boy? why the boy I got when I came home in the Cock-boat one night, about a year ago? you have not forgotten't, I hope? I think I left behinde for a boy, and a boy I must be answer'd: I'm sure I was not drunk, it could be no girl.

Wife. Nay then I do perceive my fault is known. Dear man, your pardon.

Comp. Pardon. Why thou hast not made away my boy, hast thou? Ile hang thee if there were ne're a whore in London more, if thou hast hurt but his little toe.

Wife. Your long absence, with rumor of your death, After long battery I was surprized.

Comp. Surprized? I cannot blame thee: Black-wall, if it were double black-walled, can't hold out always, no more than Lynse-house, or Shadwell, or the strongest Suburbs about London, and when it comes to that, woe be to the City too.

Wife. Pursued by gifts and promises I yielded: Consider husband, I am a woman, neither the first nor last of such Offenders, 'tis true, I have a childe.

Comp. Ha, you? and what shall I have then I pray? will not you labor for me as I shall do for you? Because I was out o'th way when I was gotten, shall I loose my share? There's better Law amongst the Players yet; for a fellow shall have his share though he do not play that day: if you look for any part of my fours Years wages, I will have half the boy:

Wife. If you can forgive me, I shall be joyed at it.

Comp. Forgive thee, for what? for doing me a pleasure? and what is he that would seem to father my childe?

Wife. A man sir, whom in better courtesies we have been beholding too: the Merchant, Mr. Franckford.

Comp. Ile acknowledge no other courtesies; for this I am beholding to him, and I would require it if his wife were young enough. Though he be one of our Merchants at Sea, he shall give me leave to be Owner at home. And where's my boy? shall I see him?

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Wife. He's nurst at Bednal-green: 'tis now too late,
To morrow Ile bring you to it, if you please.

Comp. I would thou couldst bring me another by to morrow.
Come, we'l eat and to bed, and if a fair Gale come,
We'l hoist sheets, and set forwards.
Let fainting fools lie sick upon their scorns,
Ile teach a Cuckold how to hide his horns.

Exeunt.

Enter Woodroff, Franckford, Raymond, Eustace, Grover,
Lyonel, Clare, Luce.

Wood. This wants a president, that a Bridegroom should so discreet and decently observe his Forms, Postures, all customary Rites belonging to the Table, and then hide himself from his expected wages in the bed.

Franck. Let this be forgotten too, that it remains not a first example.

Raym. Keep it amongst us, lest it beget too much unfruitful sorrow: most likely 'tis that love to Lessingham hath fastened on him, we all denied.

Eust. 'Tis more certain than likely. I know 'tis so,

Grov. Conceal then: the event may be well enough.

Wood The Bride my daughter, she's hidden too:
This last hour she hath not been seen with us.

Raym. Perhaps they are together.

Eust. And then we make too strict an inquisition, under correction of fair modesty, should they be stoln away to bed together, what would you say to that?

Wood. I would say, Speed 'em well,
And if no worse news comes, Ile never weep for't.
How now, hast thou any tidings?

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Yes forsooth, I have tidings.

Wood. Of any one that's lost?

Nurse. Of one that's found agen, forsooth.

Wood. Oh, he was lost, it seems then?

Franck. This tidings comes to me, I guess Sir.

Nurse. Yes truly does it, sir.

Raym. I, has old Lads work for young Nurses?

Eust. Yes, when they groan towards their second infancy.

Clare. I fear my self most guilty for the absence of the Bridegroom,

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groom: what our wills will do with over rash and headlong peevishness, to bring our calm discretions to repentance? Lessingham's mistaken, quite out o'th way of my purpose too.

Franck. Return'd?

Nurse. And all discover'd.

Franck. A fool rid him further off. Let him not

Come near the child.

Nurse. Nor see't, if it be your charge.

Franck. It is, and strictly.

Nurse. To morrow morning, as I hear, he purposeth to come to Bednal-green, his wife with him.

Franck. He shall be met there; yet if he fore-stall my coming, keep the childe safe. Nurse. If he be the earlier up, he shall arrive at the proverb.

Exit Nurse.

Enter Rockfield and Annabel.

Wood. So, so, there's some good luck yet,
The Bride's in sight agen.

Anna. Father, and Gentlemen all, beseech you entreat this Gentleman with all courtesie, he is a loving kinsman of my Bon-viles, that kindly came to gratulate our Wedding; but as the day falls out, you see alone I personate both Groom and Bride; onely your help to make this welcome better.

Wood. Most dearly. Raym. To all, assure you sir.

Wood. But where's the Bridegroom, Girl? We are all at a non-plus here, at a stand, quite out, the Musick ceased, and dancing surbated, not a light heel amongst us; my Cousin Clare too as cloudy here as on a washing-day.

Clare. It is because you will not dance with me, I should then shake it off.

Anna. 'Tis I have cause to be the sad one now, if any be: but I have question'd with my meditations, and they have rend'red well and comfortably to the worst fear I found: Suppose this day he had long since appointed to his foe to meet, and fetch a Reputation from him (which is the dearest Jewel unto man.) Say he do fight, I know his goodness such, that all those Powers that love it are his guard, and ill cannot betide him.

Wood. Prithee peace, thou'lt make us all Cowards to hear a woman instruct so valiantly. Come, the Musick, I'll dance my self rather than thus put down, what, I am rife a little yet.

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Anna. Onely this Gentleman, pray you be free in welcome too, I tell you I was in a fear when first I saw him.

Roch. Ha? she'll tell.

Anna. I had quite lost my way in my first amazement, but he so fairly came to my recovery, in his kinde conduct, gave me such loving comforts to my fears: ('twas he instructed me in what I spake) and many better than I have told you yet, you shall hear more anon.

Roch. So, she will out with it.

Anna. I must, I see, supply both places still: Come, when I have seen you back to your pleasure, I will return to you, Sir: we must discourse more of my Bonvile yet.

Omnis. A noble Bride's faith.

Clare. You have your wishes, and you may be merry,
Mine have over-gone me. Exeunt.

Manent Rochfield solus.

Roch. It is the tremblingst trade to be a Thief, h'ad need have all the world bound to the peace, besides the bushes, and the phanes of houses; every thing that moves he goes in fear of his life on. A furr-gown'd Cat, and meet her in the night, she stares with a Constables eye upon him; and every Dog, a Watch-man; a black Cowe and a Calf with a white face after her, shows like a surly Justice and his Clerk; and if the Baby go but to the bag, 'tis ink and paper for a *Mittimus*: Sure I shall never thrive on't, and it may be I shall need take no care, I may be now at my journeys end, or but the Goals distance, and so to th' other place: I trust a woman with a secret worth a hanging, is that well? I could finde in my heart to runaway yet. And that were base too, to run from a woman; I can lay claim to nothing but her Vows, and they shall strengthen me. Enter Annabel.

Anna. See sir, my promise, there's twenty Pieces, the full value I vow, of what they cost.

Roch. Lady, do not trap me like a Sumpter-horse, and then spur-gall me till I break my wind: if the Constable be at the door, let his fair staff appear, perhaps I may corrupt him with this Gold.

Anna. Nay? then if you mistrust me: Father, Enter all as before, Gentlemen, Mr. Raymond, Enstace, and a Saylor-

Wood.

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Wood. How now, what's the matter, Girl?

Anna. For shame will you bid your Kinsman welcome? No one but I will lay a hand on him, till I can do no worse. Leave him alone, and all a revelling.

Wood. Oh, is that it. Welcome, welcome heartily, I thought the Bridegroom had been return'd. But I have news, Annabel: this fellow brought it. Welcome Sir, why you tremble methinks, Sir.

Anna. Some agony of anger 'tis, believe it, his entertainment is so cold and feeble.

Rajm. Pray be cheer'd, Sir.

Roch. I'm wondrous well, sir, 'twas the Gentleman's mistake.

Wood. 'Twas my hand shook belike, then you must pardon Age, I was stiffer once. But as I was saying, I should by promise see the Sea to morrow, 'tis meant for Physick as low as Lee or Margets: I have a Vessel riding forth, Gentlemen, 'tis called the God-speed too, though I say't, a brave one, well and richly fraughted; and I can tell you she carries a Letter of Mart in her mouth too, and twenty roaring Boys on both sides on her, Star-board and Lar-board. What say you now, to make you all Adventurers? you shall have fair dealing, that I'll promise you.

Rajm. A very good motion, sir I begin, there's my ten pieces.

Eust. I second 'em with these.

Grov. My ten in the third place.

Roch. And Sir, if you refuse not a proffet'd love, take my ten Pieces with you too.

Wood. Yours, above all the rest, Sir.

Anna. Then make 'em above, venter ten more.

Roch. Alas Lady, 'tis a younger brothers portion, and all in one Bottom.

Anna. At my encouragement, Sir, your credit (if you want Sir) shall not sit down under that sum return'd.

Eoch. With all my heart, Lady. There Sir: So, she has fisht for her Gold back, and caught it; I am no thief now.

Wood. I shall make here a pretty Assurance.

Roch. Sir, I shall have a suit to you.

Wood. You are likely to obtain it then, Sir.

Roch. That I may keep you company to Sea, and attend you back; I am a little travell'd.

Wood.

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Wood. And heartily thank you too, sir.

Anna. Why, that's well said: Pray you be merry, though your Kinsman be absent, I am here, the worst part of him, yet that shall serve to give you welcome: to morrow may show you what this night will not, and be full assured,
Unless your twenty Pieces be ill lent,
Nothing shall give you cause of Discontent.
There's ten more, Sir. 7 regal to your sister

Rock. Why should I fear? Fouter on't, I'll be merry now spite
of the Hang-man.

Exeunt.

Finis Actus secundus.

ACT 3. SCENE I.

Enter Lessingham and Bonvile.

Bon. WE are first i'th field: I think your Enemy is staid at Dover, or some other Port, we hear not of his landing.

Less. I am confident he is come over.

Bon. You look methinks fresh coloured.

Less. Like a red Morning, friend, that still foretels a stormy day to follow: But methinks now I observe your face, that you look pale, there's death in't already.

Bon. I could chide your error, do you take me for a Coward? A Coward is not his own friend, much less can he be another mans. Know, Sir, I am come hither to instruct you by my generous example, to kill your enemy, whose name as yet I never question'd.

Less. Nor dare I name him yet, for dis-heartning you.

Bon. I do begin to doubt the goodness of your Quarrel.

Less. Now you hav't; for I protest that I must fight with one from whom in the whole course of our acquaintance, I never did receive the least injury.

Bon. It may be the forgetful Wine begot some sudden blow, and thereupon 'tis Challenge, how'e're you are engaged; and for my part I will not, take your course, my unlucky friend, to say your Conscience grows pale and heartless, maintaining a bad Cause: fight as Lawyers plead, who gain the best of reputation when they can fetch a bad Cause smoothly off: you are in, and must through.

Less.

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Less. Oh my friend, the noblest ever man had : when my fate threw me upon this business, I made trial of divers had profest to me much love, and found their friendship like the effects that kept our company together, Wine and Riot : giddy and sinking I had found 'em oft, brave Seconds at pluralities of Healths, but when it came to th' proof, my Gentlemen appeared to me as promising and failing as cozening Lotteries ; but then I found this Jewel worth a thousand Counterfeits : I did but name my Engagement, and you flew unto my succor with that chearfulness, as a great General hastes to a Battel, when that the chief of the adverse part is a man glorious, but of ample fame : you left your Bridal-bed to finde your Death-bed, and herein you most nobly exprest, that the affection 'tween two loyal friends is far beyond the love of man to woman, and is more near allied to eternity. What better friends part could be showed i'th world ? it transcends all ! My father gave me life, but you stand by my honor when 'tis falling, and nobly under-propt it with your sword. But now you have done me all this service, how ? how shall I requite this ? how return my grateful recompence for all this love ? For it am I come hither with full purpose to kill you.

Bon. Ha ? *Less.* Yes : I have no opposite i'th world but your self : There, read the Warrant for your death.

Bon. 'Tis a womans hand.

Less. And 'tis a bad hand too : the most of 'em speak fair, write foul, mean worse. *Bon.* Kill me ! away, you jest.

Less. Such jest as your sharp-witted Gallants use to utter, and loose their friends ; Read there how I am fettered in a womans proud Command : I do Love madly, and must do madly : deadliest Hellebore or vomit of a Toad is qualified poysone to the malice of a woman. *Bon.* And kill that friend ? Strange !

Less. You may see, Sir, although the Tenure by which Land was held in Villenage be quite extinct in *England*, yet you have women there at this day living, make a number of slaves.

Bon. And kill that friend ? She mocks you upon my life, she does Equivocate : her meaning is, you cherish in your breast either self-love, or pride, as your best friend, and she wishes you'd kill that.

Less. Sure her Command is more bloody ; for she loathes me, and

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and has put, as she imagines, this impossible task, for ever to be quit and free from me; but such is the violence of my affection, that I must undergo it. Draw your sword, and guard your self, though I fight in fury, I shall kill you in cold blood, for I protest 'tis done in heart-sorrow.

Bon. Ile not fight with you, for I have much advantage; the truth is, I wear a privy Coat.

Less. Prithee put it off then, if then bee'st manly.

Bon. The defence I mean, is the justice of my Cause that would guard me, and fly to thy destruction: what confidence thou wearest in a bad cause, I am likely to kill thee if I fight, and then you fail to effect your Mrs. bidding, or to enjoy the fruit of 't; I have ever wisht thy happiness, and vow I now so much affect it in compassion of my friends sorrow, make thy way to it.

Less. That were a cruel Murder.

Bon. Believ't 'tis ne're intended otherwise, when 'tis a womans bidding. *Less.* Oh the necessity of my fate.

Bon. You shed tears.

Less. And yet must on in my cruel purpose: a Judge methinks looks loveliest when he weeps, pronouncing of deaths Sentence: how I stagger in my resolve! guard thee, for I came hither to do, and not to suffer; wilt not yet be perswaded to defend thee? turn the point, advance it from the ground above thy head, and let it underprop thee otherwise, in a bold resistance.

Bon. Stay. Thy injunction was, thou shouldest kill thy friend.

Less. It was.

Bon. Observe me, he wrongs me most, ought to offend me least, and they that study man, say of a friend, there's nothing in the world that's harder found, nor sooner lost: thou camest to kill thy friend, and thou mayest brag thou hast don't; for here for ever all friendship dyes between us, and my heart for bringing forth any effects of love, shall be as barren to thee as this sand we tread on; cruel, and inconstant as the Sea that beats upon this Beach. We now are severed: thus hast thou slain thy friend, and satisfied what the Witch thy Mrs. bad thee. Go and report that thou hast slain thy friend. *Less.* I am served right.

Bon. And now that I do cease to be thy friend, I will fight with thee as thine enemy, I came not over idly to do nothing.

Less.

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Less. Oh friend !

Bon. Friend ? The naming of that word shall be the quarrel. What do I know but that thou lovest my wife , and fain'dst this plot to divide me from her bed , and that this Letter here is counterfeit ? Will you advance Sir.

Less. Not a blow ; 'twould appear ill in either of us to fight : in you unmanly ; for believe it Sir, you have disarmed me already, done away all power of resistance in me , it would show beastly to do wrong to the dead : to me you say , you are dead for ever, lost on *Callis-sands* , by the cruelty of a woman ; yet remember you had a noble friend , whose love to you shall continue after death : shall I go over in the same Barque with you ?

Bon. Not for yon town of *Callis*, you know 'tis dangerous living at Sea, with a dead body.

Less. Oh you mock me, may you enjoy all your noble wishes.

Bon. And may you finde a better friend then I, and better keep him.

Exeunt.

Enter Nurse, Compass, and his Wife.

Nurse. Indeed you must pardon me, Goodman *Compass*, I have no authority to deliver, no not to let you see the Childe : to tell you true, I have command unto the contrary.

Comp. Command. From whom ? Nurse. By the father of it.

Comp. The father? Who am I?

Nurse. Not the father sure. The Civil Law has found it otherwise.

Comp. The Civil Law : why then the Uncivil Law shall make it mine agen ; Ile be as dreadful as a *Shroose-tuesday* to thee, I will tear thy Cottage but I will see my Childe.

Nurse. Speak but half so much agen , Ile call the Constable, and lay Burglary to thy charge.

Wife. My good husband , be patient. And prithee Nurse let him see the Childe.

Nurse. Indeed I dare not : the father first delivered me the Childe, he pays me well, and weekly for my pains, and to his use I keep it.

Comp. Why thou white Bastard-breeder, is not this the mother ?

Nurse. Yes, I grant you that.

Comp. Dost thou ? and I grant it too : And is not the Childe mine own then by the wifes Copy-hold ?

Nurse. The Law must try that.

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Comp. Law? Dost think Ile be but a Father in Law? all the Law betwixt Black-wall and Tuttie-street, and there's a pretty deal, shall not keep it from me mine own flesh and blood? who does use to get my children but my self?

Nurse. Nay, you must look to that, I ne're knew you get any.

Comp. Never? put on a clean Smock, and try me, if thou darfst, three to one I get a Bastard on thee to morrow morning between one and three.

Nurse. Ile see thee hangd first.

Enter Franckford

and Luce.

Nurse. Oh here's the father, now pray talk with him.

Franck. Good morrow Neighbor: morrow to you both.

Comp. Both? Morrow to you and your wife too.

Franck. I would speak calmly with you.

Comp. I know what belongs to a Calm and a Storm too. A cold word with you: You have tyed your Mare in my ground.

Franck. No, 'twas my Nag.

Comp. I will cut off your Nags tayl, and make his rump make Hair-buttons, if e're I take him there agen.

Franck. Well sit, but to the Main.

Comp. Main. Yes, and Ile elip his Main too, and crop his ears too, do you mark? and back-gaul him, and spur-gaul him, do you note? And slit his Nose, do you smell me now, Sir? Unbritch his Barbel, and discharge his Bullets: Ile gird him till he stinks, you smell me now I'm sure.

Franck. You are too rough neighbor, to maintain.

Comp. Maintain? you shall not maintain no childe of mine, my wife does not bestow her labor to that purpose.

Franck. You are too speedy: I will not maintain

Comp. No marry shall you not.

Franck. The deed to be lawful: I have repented it, and to the Law given satisfaction, my purse has paid for't.

Comp. Your purse: 'twas my wifes purse. You brought in the Coin indeed, but it was found base and counterfeit.

Franck. I would treat colder with you, if you be pleased.

Comp. Pleased? yes I am pleased well enough, serve me so still: I am going agen to sea one of these days, you know where I dwell, yet you'll but loose your labor, get as many children as

you

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you can, you shall keep none of them, Franck. You are mad.

Comp. If I be horn-mad, what's that to you?

Franck. I leave off milder phrase, and then tell you plain you are a

Comp. A what? what am I? Fr. A Coxcomb.

Comp. A Coxcomb? I knew 'twould begin with a C.

Franck. The childe is mine, I am the father of it; As it is past the deed, 'tis past the shame, I do acknowledge, and will enjoy it.

Comp. Yes, when you can get it agen, is it not my wifes labor? I'm sure she's the mother, you may be as far off the father as I am; for my wife's acquainted with more Whore-masters besides your self, and crafty Merchants too.

Wife. No indeed husband, to make my offence both least and most, I knew no other man, he's the begetter, but the childe is mine, I bred and bore it, and I will not loose it.

Luce. The childe's my husbands, Dame, and he must have it: I do allow my sufferance to the deed, in lieu I never yet was fruitful to him, and in my barrenness excuse my wrong.

Comp. Let him dung his own ground better at home, then if he plant his Reddish roots in my garden, Ile eat 'em with bread and Salt, though I get no Mutton to 'em; what tho your husband lent my wife your distaff, shall not the yarn be mine? Ile have the head, let him carry the spindle home agen.

Fr. Forebear more words, then let the Law try it: mean time Nurse keep the childe, and to keep it better here take more pay beforehand. There's money for thee.

Comp. There's money for me too, keep it for me, Nurse: give him both thy dugs at once: I pay for thy right dug.

Nurs. I have two hands you see, Gentlemen this does but show how the law will hamper you: even thus you must be used.

Fr. The law shall show which is the worthier Gender: a School-boy can do't.

Comp. Ile whip that School-boy that declines the childe from my wife and her heirs: do not I know my wifes case, the Generative Case, and that's *Huius*, as great a case as can be.

Fr. Well, fare you well, we shall meet in another place.

Come Luce

Exit.

Comp. Meet her in the same place agen if you dare, and do your worst: must we go to law for our Children now a days? No

mavcl

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marvel if the Lawyers grow rich ; but e're the Law shall have
a Lymb, a Leg, a Joynt, a Nayl,
I will spend more then a whole childe in getting,
Some win by play, and others by, by betting.

Exeunt.

Enter Raymond, Eustace, Lyonel, Grover, Annabel, Clare.

Lyon. Whence was that Letter sent ? Ann. From Dover, Sir.

Lyon. And does that satisfie you what was the cause of his going over ?

Ann. It does : yet had he onely sent this it had bin sufficient.

Ray. Why, what's that ?

Ann. His Will wherein he has estated me in all his land.

Eust. He's gone to fight. Lyon. Lessingham's second certain.

Ann. And I am lost, lost in't for ever.

Clare. Oh fool Lessingham, thou hast mistook my injunction utterly, utterly mistook it, and I am mad, stark mad with my own thoughts, not knowing what event their going or'e will come too; 'tis too late now for my tongue to cry my heart mercy, would I could be senceless till I hear of their return: I fear me both are lost.

Ray. Who should it be Lessingham's gone to fight with ?

Eust. Faith I cannot possibly conjecture.

Ann. Miserable creature ! a Maid, a Wife, and Widow in the compass of two days. Ray. Are you sad too ?

Clare. I am not very well, Sir. Ray. I must put life in you.

Clare. Let me go, Sir.

Ray. I do love you in spight of your heart.

Clare. Believe it there was never a fitter time to express it ; for my heart has a great deal of spight in't.

Ray. I will discourse to you fine fancies.

Clare. Fine fooleries, will you not ?

Ray. By this hand I love you, and will court you.

Clare. Fie, you can command your tongue, and I my ears to hear you no further.

Ray. On my reputation, she's off o'th hindges strangely.

Ent. Woodroff, Rochfeild, and a saylor.

Wood. Daughter, good news. An. What is my husband heard of ?

Wood. That's not the business ; but you have here a Cousin you may be mainly proud of, and I am sorry 'tis by your husbands kindred, not your own, that we might boast to have so brave a man in out

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our Alliance.

Ann. What so soon return'd? you have made but a short voyage; howsoever you are to me most welcome.

Roch. Lady thanks, 'tis you have made me your own creature, of all my being fortunes and poor fame, if I have purchas'd any, and of which I no way boast, next the high providence, you have bin the sole creatress.

Ann. Oh dear Cousin, you are grateful above merit, what occasion drew you so soon from Sea?

Wood. Such an occasion, as I may bless Heaven for, you thank their bounty, and all of us be joyful. *Ann.* Tell us how.

Wood. Nay daughter, the discourse will best appear in his relation, where he fails, He help:

Roch. Not to molest your patience with recital of every vain, and needless Circumstance, 'twas briefly thus: Scarce having reacht to Margets, bound on our voyage, suddenly in view appeared to us three Spanish men of War, these having spied the English Cross advance, salute us with a piece to have us strike, ours better spirited and no way daunted, at their unequal oddes, though but one bottom, returned 'em fire for fire: the fight begins, and dreadful on the sudden, still they proffered to board us, still we bravely beat 'em off.

Wood. But daughter, mark the Event.

Roch. Sea room we got, our ship being swift of sayl, it helpt us much, yet two unfortunate shot, one struck the Captains head off, and the other with an unlucky splinter laid the Master dead on the hatches; all our spirits then failed us.

Wood. Not all, you shall hear further, daughter.

Roch. For none was left to manage, nothing now was talkt of but to yeild up ship and goods, and mediate for our peace.

Wood. Nay Cous. proceed.

Roch. Excuse me, I intreat you, for what's more, hath already past my memory.

Wood. But mine it never can: Then he stood up, and with his oratory made us agen to recollect our spirits so late dejected.

Roch. Pray Sir.

Wood. He speak't out; by unite consent then the command was his, and 'twas his place now to bestir him, down he went below

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low, and put the Lin-stocks in the Gunners hands; they ply their ordinance bravely, then agen up to the decks; courage is there renewed, fear now not found amongst us: within less then four hours fight two of their ships were sunk, both foundered, and soon swallowed: not long after the three begins to wallow, lyes on the Lee to stop her leakes, then boldly we come on, boarded and took her, and she's now our prize.

Sayl. Of this we were eye witness.

Wood. And many more brave boys of us, besides my self for one; never was, Gentlemen, a Sea fight better managed.

Roch. Thanks to Heaven we have saved our own, dammaged the enemy, and to our Nations glory, we bring home honor and profit.

Wood. In which Cousin *Rochfeild*, you as a venturer have a double share, besides the name of Captain, and in that a second benefit, but most of all, way to more great employment.

Roch. Thus your bounty hath been to me a blessing.

Ray. Sir, we are all indebted to your valor, this beginning may make us of small venturers, to become hereafter wealthy Merchants.

Wood. Daughter and Gentlemen, this is the man was born to to make us all, come enter, enter; we will in and feast, he's in the Bridegrooms absence my chief guest.

Exeunt.

Finis Actus Tertii.

ACT. 4. SCENE 1.

Enter *Compass*, *Wife*, *Lyonel*, and *Pettifog the Attorney*; and one *Boy*.

Comp. Three Tuns do you call this Tavern? it has a good neighbor of *Guild-hall*, Mr. *Pettifog*. Show a room boy.

Boy. Welcome Gentlemen. *Comp.* What? art thou here *Hedge!* *Boy.* I am glad you are in health, sir.

Comp. This was the honest *Crack-roap* first gave me tidings of my wifes fruitfulness. Art bound Prentice? *Boy.* Yes, Sir.

Comp. Mayest thou long jumble Bastard most artificially, to the profit of thy Master, and pleasure of thy Mistriss.

Boy. What Wine drink ye, Gentlemen?

Lyon.

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Lyon. What Wine relishes your pallate, good Mr. Pettifog?

Pet. Nay, ask the woman.

Comp. Ellegant for her, I know her Diet.

Pet. Believe me, I con her thank for't, I am of her side.

Comp. Marry, and reason, sir, we have entertain'd you for our Attorney. Boy. A Cup of neat Allegant?

Comp. Yes, but do not make it speak Welch, boy.

Boy. How mean you?

Comp. Put no Metheglin in't, ye rogue.

They sit down, Pettifog pulls out papers.

Boy. Not a drop, as I am true Britain.

Enter Franckford, Eustace, Luce, and Mr. Dodge a Lawyer to another Table, and a Drawer.

Fr. Show a private room, Drawer. Dr. Welcome Gentlemen.

Eust. As far as you can from noise, boy.

Dr. Further this way then, sir; for in the next room there are three or four Fish-wives taking up a brabbling business.

Fr. Let's not sit near them by any means.

Dodge. Fill Canary, sirrah.

Fr. And what do you think of my Cause, Mr. Dodge?

Dodge. Oh we shall carry it most indubitably: you have money to go through with the business, and ne're fear it but we'll trownce 'em, you are the true Father.

Luce. The mother will confess as much.

Dodge. Yes Mistriss, we have taken her Affidavit. Look you sir, here's the Answer to his Declaration.

Fr. You may think strange, sir, that I am at charge to call a Charge upon me: but 'tis truth, I made a Purct as lately, and in that I did estate the Childe, 'bout which I'm sued, Joynt-purchaser in all the Land I bought: now that's one reason that I should have care, besides the tye of blood, to keep the Childe under my wing, and see it carefully instructed in those fair Abilities may make it worthy hereafter to be mine, and enjoy the Land I have provided for't.

Luce. Right, and I councel'd you to make that Purchase; and therefore Ile not have the Childe brought up by such a Coxcomb as now sues for him, he'd bring him up onely to be a Swabber: he was born a Merchant and a Gentleman, and he shall live and die so.

Dodge.

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Dodge. Worthy Mistriss, I drink to you: you are a good woman, and but few of so noble a patience. *Enter 2 Boy.*

Enter boy. Score a quart of Allegant t'oh' Woodcock.

Enter 1 Boy like a Musician.

I Boy. Will you have any musick, Gentlemen?

Comp. Musick amongst Lawyers? here's nothing but discord.

What, Rafe! here's another of my young Cuckoes I heard last April, before I heard the Nightingale: no musick, good Rafe: here boy, your father was a Taylor, and methinks by your leering eye you should take after him. A good boy, make a leg handsomly, scrape your self out of our company. And what do you think of my Suit, sir?

Pet. Why, look you, sir: The Defendant was arrested first by *Lattice* in an Action of Trespass.

Comp. And a Lawyer told me it should have been an Action of the Case, should it not wife?

Wife. I have no skill in Law, sir: but you heard a Lawyer say so.

Pet. I, but your Action of the Case is in that point too ticklish.

Comp. But what do you think, shall I overthrow my adversary?

Pet. Sans question: The childe is none of yours: what of that? I marry a widow is possest of a Ward, shall not I have the tuition of that Ward? Now sir, you lye at a stronger Ward; for *partus sequitur ventrem*, says the Civil Law: and if you were within compass of the four Seas, as the common Law goes, the childe shall be yours certain.

Comp. There's some comfort in that yet. Oh your Attorneys in *Guild-hall* have a fine time on't.

Lyon. You are in effect both Judge and Jury your selves.

Comp. And how you will laugh at your Clients when you sit in a Tavern, and call them Coxcombs, and whip up a Cause, as a Barber trims his Customers on a Christmase Eve, a snip, a wipe, and away.

Pet. That's ordinary, sir: you shall have the like at a *Nisi Prins*. Oh you are welcome, Sir. *Enter 1 Client.*

I Client. Sir, you'll be mindful of my Suit.

Pet. As I am religious, I'll drink to you.

I Client. I thank you. By your favor, Mistriss. I have much business and cannot stay; but there's money for a quart of Wine.

Comp.

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Comp. By no means.

1 Client. I have said, Sir. *Exit.*

Enter 2 Client.

Pet. He's my Client sir, and he must pay; this is my tribute. Custom is not more truly paid in the Sound of Denmark.

2 Client. Good sir, be careful of my business.

Pet. Your Declaration's drawn, sir: I'll drink to you.

2 Client. I cannot drink this morning; but there's money for a porridge of Wine. Pet. Oh good sir.

2 Client. I have done, sir. Morrow, Gentlemen. *Exit.*

Comp. We shall drink good cheap, Mr. *Pettifog.*

Pet. And we sate here long you'd say so. I have sate here in this Tavern but one half hour, drunk but three pints of wine, and what with the offering of my Clients in that short time, I have got nine shillings clear, and paid all the Reckoning.

Lyon. Almost a Councillors Fee.

Pet. And a great one as the world goes in *Guild-hall*; for now our young Clerks share with 'em, to help 'em to Clients.

Comp. I don't think but that the Cucking-stool is an enemy to a number of brables, that would else be determined by Law.

Pet. 'Tis so indeed, sir: My Client that came in now, sues his neighbor for kicking his Dog, and using the defamatory speeches, *Come out Cuckolds curr.*

Lyon. And what shall you recover upon this speech?

Pet. In *Guild-hall* I assure you, the other that came in was an Informer, a precious knave.

Comp. Will not the Ballad of *Flood* that was preft, make them leave their knavery?

Pet. I'll tell you how he was served: This Informer comes into *Turnball-street* to a *Viqualling-house*, and there falls in league with a Wench.

Comp. A *Tweak*, or *Bronstrops*, I learnt that name in a Play.

Pet. Had belike some private dealings with her, and there got a *Goose*.

Comp. I would he had got two, I cannot away with an Informer.

Pet. Now sir, this fellow in revenge of this, informs against the Bawd that kept the house, that she used Cannes in her house; but the cunning Jade comes me into 'th Court, and there deposes that she gave him true *Winchester* measure.

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Comp. Marry, I thank her with all my heart for't. *Ent. Drawer Draw.* Here's a Gentleman, one Justice Woodroff enquires for Mr. Franckford. *Fr.* Oh, my brother and the other Compromiser come to take up the business.

Enter Councillor and Woodroff.

Wood. We have conferred and labored for your peace, unless your stubborness prohibit it; and be assured, as we can determine it, the Law will end, for we have sought the Cases.

Comp. If the Childe fall to my share, I am content to end upon any conditions, the Law shall run on head-long else.

Fr. Your purse must run by like a Foot-man then.

Comp. My purse shall run open mouth'd at thee.

Coun. My friend, be calm, you shall hear the reasons: I have stood up for you, pleaded your Cause, but am overthrown, yet no further yielded than your own pleasure; you may go on in Law if you refuse our Censure.

Comp. I will yield to nothing but my Childe.

Coun. 'Tis then as vain in us to seek your peace, yet take the reasons with you: This Gentleman first speaks, a Justice to me, and observe it, A childe that's base and illegitimate born, the father found, who (if the need require it) secures the charge and damage of the Parish but the father? who charged with education but the father? then by clear consequence he ought for what he pays for, to enjoy. Come to the strength of reason, upon which the Law is grounded: the earth brings forth, this ground or that, her Crop of Wheat or Rye, whether shall the Seeds-man enjoy the sheaf, or leave it to the earth that brought it forth? The summer tree brings forth her natural fruit, spreads her large arms, who but the lord of it shall pluck Apples, or command the lops? or shall they sink into the root agen? 'tis still most cleer upon the Fathers part.

Comp. All this Law I deny, and will be mine own Lawyer. Is not the earth our Mother? And shall not the earth have all her children agen? I wold see that Law durst keep any of us back, she'll have Lawyers and all first, tho they be none of her best children. My wife is the mother, and so much for the Civil-Law. Now I come agen, and y'are gone at the Common-Law: suppose this is my ground, I keep a Sow upon it, as it might be my wife,

you

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you keep a Boar , as it might be my adversary here ; your Boar comes foaming into my ground , jumbles with my Sow, and wallowes in her mire , my Sow cryes weep , as if she had Pigs in her belly, who shall keep these Pigs ? he the Boar, or she the Sow ?

Wood. Past other alteration, I am changed , the Law is on the Mothers part. *Coun.* For me, I am strong in your opinion, I never knew my judgement erre so far, I was confirmed upon the other part, and now am flat against it. *Wood.* Sir you must yeild, believe it there's no Law can relieve you.

Fr. I found it in my self : well sir, the childe 's your wifes, Ile strive no further in it , and being so neer unto agreement, let us go quite through to't ; forgive my fault , and I forgive my charges, nor will I take back the inheritance I made unto it.

Comp. Nay, there you shall finde me kinde too, I have a potle of Claret, and a Capon to supper for you ; but no more Mutton for you, not a bit.

Ray. Yes a shoulder, and we'l be there too , or a leg opened with Venison sawce.

Comp. No legs opened by your leave; nor no such sawce.

Wood. Well brother, and neighbor, I am glad you are friends.

Omnis. All, all joy at it. *Exeunt Wood.Fr. and Lawyers.*

Comp. Urse, come kiss Urse, all friends.

Ray. Stay sir, one thing I would advise you, 'tis Councel worth a Fee, tho I be no Lawyer, 'tis Physick indeed, & cures Cuckoldry, to keep that spightful brand out of your forehead , that it shall not dare to meet or look out at any window to you , 'tis better then an Onion to a green wound i'th left hand made by fire , it takes out scar and all.

Comp. This were a rare receipt, Ile content you for your skill.

Ray. Make here a flat divorce between your selves, be you no husband, nor let her be no wife, within two hours you may salute agen, woe, and wed afresh, and then the Cuckold's blotted. This medicine is approved.

Comp. Excellent, and I thank you : Urse, I renounce thee; and I renounce my self from thee ; thou art a Widow, Urse, I will go hang my self two hours , and so long thou shalt drown thy self, then will we meet agen in the Pease-field by Bishop-Hall , and as the Swads and the Cods shall instruct us, we'l talk of a new

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matter. *Wife.* I will be ruled, fare you well, sir. *Exit wife.*

Comp. Farewel widdow, remember time and place, chnge your Clothes too, do ye hear, widow? Sir, I am beholding to your good Council.

Ray. But you'l not follow your own so far I hope? you said you'd hang your self.

Comp. No I have devised a better way, I will go drink my self dead for an hour, then when I awake agen, I am a fresh new man, and so I go a wooing.

Ray. That's handsome, and I'll lend thee a dagger.

Comp. For the long Weapon let me alone then. *Exeunt.*

Enter Lessingham and Clare.

Clare. Oh sir, are you return'd? I do expect to hear strange news now.

Less. I have none to tell you, I am onely to relate I have done ill at a womans bidding, that's I hope no news: yet wherefore do I call that ill, begets my absolute happiness? you now are mine, I must enjoy you solely. *Clare.* By what warrant?

Less. By your own condition, I have been at *Callis*, performed your will, drawn my revengful sword, and slain my neerest and best friend i'th world I had, for your sake.

Clare. Slain your friend for my sake? *Less.* A most sad truth.

Clare. And your best friend? *Less.* My chiefest.

Clare. Then of all men you are most miserable, nor have you ought further'd your suit in this, though I enjoyn'd you to't, for I had thought that I had been the best esteemed friend you had i'th world. *Less.* Ye did not wish I hope, that I should have murder'd you? *Clare.* You shall perceive more of that hereafter: But I pray sir tell me, for I do freeze with expectation of it, it chills my heart with horror till I know what friends blood you have sacrificed to your fury and to my fatal sport, this bloody Riddle? who is it you have slain? *Less.* Bonvile the Bridegroom..

Clare. Say? Oh you have struck him dead thorough my heart, in being true to me, you have proved in this the falsest Traitor: oh I am lost for ever: yet wherefore am I lost? rather recovered from a deadly witchcraft, and upon his grave I will not gather Rue, but Violets to bless my wedding strewings; good sir tell me, are you certain he is dead? *Less.* Never, never to be recovered.

Clare

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Clare. Why now sir, I do love you, with an entire heart, I could dance methinks, never did wine or musick stir in woman, a sweeter touch of Mirth, I will marry you, instantly marry you.

Less. This woman has strange changes, you are ta'ne strangely with his death.

Clare. He give the reason I have to be thus extasied with joy: know sir, that you have slain my dearest friend, and fatalest enemy.

Less. Most strange!

Clare. Tis true, you have ta'ne a mass of Lead from off my heart, for ever would have sunk it in despair; when you beheld me yesterday, I stood as if a Merchant walking on the *Downs*, should see some goodly Vessel of his own sunk 'fore his face i'th Harbor, and my heart retained no more heat then a man that toyles, and vainly labors to put out the flames that burns his house to'th bottom. I will tell you a strange concealement, sir, and till this minute never revealed, and I will tell it now, smiling and not blushing; I did love that *Bonvyle*, (not as I ought, but as a woman might that's beyond reason,) I did doat upon him, tho he near knew of't, and beholding him before my face wedded unto another, and all my interest in him forfeited, I fell into despair, and at that instant you urging your Suit to me, and I thinking that I had been your onely friend i'th world, I heartily did wish you would have kill'd that friend your self, to have ended all my sorrow, and had prepared it, that unwittingly you should have don't by poison.

Less. Strange amazement!

Clare. The effects of a strange Love. Less. Tis a dream sure.

Clare. No 'tis real sir, believe it. Less. Would it were not.

Clare. What sir, you have done bravely, 'tis your Mistress that tells you, you have done so.

Less. But my Conscience
Is of Council 'gainst you, and pleads otherwise:
Vertue in her past actions glories still,
But vice throwes loathed looks on former ill.
But did you love this *Bonvile*?

Clare. Strangely sir, almost to a degree of madness.

Less. Trust a woman? never henceforward, I will rather trust the winds which *Lapland* Witches sell to men, all that they have is feign'd, their teeth, their hair, their blushes, nay their conscience

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too is feigned, let 'em paint, load themselves with Cloth of Tissue, they cannot yet hide woman, that will appear and disgrace all. The necessity of my fate! certain this woman has bewitched me here; for I cannot chuse but love her. Oh how fatal this might have proved, I would it had for me, it would not grieve me, tho my sword had split his heart in sunder, I had then destroyed one that may prove my Rival; oh but then what had my horror bin, my guilt of conscience? I know some do ill at womens bidding i'th Dog-days, and repent all the Winter after: no, I account it treble happiness that Bonvile lives, but 'tis my chiefest glory that our friendship is divided.

Clare. Noble friend, why do you talk to your self?

Less. Should you do so, you'd talk to an ill woman, fare you well, for ever fare you well; I will do somewhat to make as fatal breach and difference in Bonviles love as mine, I am fixt in't, my melancholly and the devil shall fashion't.

Clare. You will not leave me thus?

Less. Leave you for ever, and may my friends blood whom you loved so deerly, for ever lye imposstumed in your breast, and i'th end choak you. Womans cruelty
This black and fatal thread hath ever spun,
It must undo, or else it is undone.

Exit.

Clare. I am every way lost, and no meanes to raise me, but blest repentance: what two unvalued Jewels am I at once deprived of? now I suffer deservedly, there's no prosperity settled, Fortune plays ever with our good or ill, Like Cross and Pile, and turns up which she will.

Enter Bonvile. Friend?

Clare. Oh you are the welcomest under heaven: *Lessingham* did but fright me, yet I fear that you are hurt to danger.

Bon. Not a scratch. *Clare.* Indeed you look exceeding well, methinks. *Bon.* I have bin Sea-sick lately, and we count that excellent Physick. How does my *Annabel*?

Clare. As well sir, as the fear of such a loss as your esteemed self, will suffer her. *Bon.* Have you seen *Lessingham* since he returned? *Clare.* He departed hence but now, and left w'th me a report had almost kill'd me.

Bon. What was that? *Clare.* That he had kill'd you.

Bon.

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Bon. So he has.

Clare. You mock me.

Bon. He has kill'd me for a friend, for ever silenc't all amity
between us; you may now go and embrace him, for he has fulfil-
led the purpose of that Letter.

Gives her a Letter.

Clare. Oh I know't.

She gives him another

And had you known this which I meant to have sent you an hour
'fore you were married to your wife, the Riddle had been con-
strued.

Bon. Strange! this expresses that you did love me.

Clare. With a violent affection.

Bon. Violent indeed; for it seems it was your purpose to have
ended it in violence on your friend: the unfortunate Lessingham
unwittingly should have been the Executioner.

Clare. 'Tis true. Bon. And do you love me still?

Clare. I may easily confess it, since my extremity is such that
I must needs speak or die.

Bon. And you would enjoy me though I am married?

Clare. No indeed no: I sir: you are to sleep with a sweet Bed-
fellow would knit the brow at that.

Bon. Come, come, a womans telling truth makes amends for
her playing false. You would enjoy me?

Clare. If you were a Bachelor or Widower,
Afore all the great Ones living.

Bon. But 'tis impossible to give you present satisfaction, for my
Wife is young and healthful; and I like the summer and the har-
vest of our Love, which yet I have not tasted of, so well, that and
you'l credit me, for me her days shall ne're be shortened: let your
reason therefore turn you another way, and call to minde with
best observance, the accomplishit graces of that brave Gentleman
whom late you sent to his destruction: A man so every way de-
serving, no one action of his in all his life time e're degraded
him from the honor he was born too; think how observant he'l-
prove to you in nobler request, that so obeyed you in a bad one:
And remember that afore you engaged him to an act
Of horror, to the killing of his friend,
He bore his steerage true in every part,
Led by the Compass of a noble heart.

Clare. Why do you praise him thus? You said but now he was
utterly lost to you: now 't appears you are friends, else you'd

not

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not deliver of him such a worthy commendation.

Bon. You mistake, utterly mistake that I am friends with him, in speaking this good of him : To what purpose do I praise him ? only to this fatal end , that you might fall in love and league with him. And what worse office can I do i'th world unto my enemy; than to endeavor by all means possible to marry him unto a Whore ? and there I think she stands.

Clare. Is Whore a name to be beloved ? if not, what reason have I ever to love that man puts it upon me falsely ? You have wrought a strange alteration in me : were I a man, I would drive you with my sword into the field , and there put my wrong to silence. Go, y'are not worthy to be a womans friend in the least part that concerns honorable reputation ; for you are a Liar.

Bon. I will love you now with a noble observance, if you will continue this hate unto me : gather all those graces from whence you have fain yonder, where you have left 'em in *Lessingham*, he that must be your husband ; And though henceforth I cease to be his friend , I will appear his noblest enemy, and work reconciliation 'tween you.

Clare. No, you shall not, you shall not marry him to a Strum-pet ; for that word I shall ever hate you.

Bon. Less. And for that one deed,

I shall ever love you. Come, convert your thoughts
To him that best deserves 'em, *Lessingham*.
It's most certain you have done him wrong,
But your repentance and compassion now
May make amends : disperse this melancholly,
And on that turn of Fortunes Wheel depend,
When all Calamities will mend, or end.

Exeunt.

Enter *Compass*, *Raymond*, *Eustace*, *Lyonel*, *Grover*.

Comp. Gentlemen, as you have been witness to our Divorce, You shall now be evidence to our next meeting,
Which I look for every minute, if you please Gentlemen.

Ray. We came for the same purpose, man.

Comp. I do think you'll see me come off with as smooth A forehead, make my Wife as honest a woman once more, As a man sometimes would desire, I mean of her rank, And a teeming woman as she has been. Nay surely I

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Do think to make the Childe as lawful a childe too,
As a couple of unmarried people can beget ; and let
It be begotten when the father is beyond Sea, as this
Was : do but note.

Enter Wife.

Eust. 'Tis that we wait for.

Comp. You have waited the good hour : see, she comes, a little
room I beseech you, silence and observation.

Ray. All your own, sir.

Comp. Good morrow fair Maid.

Wife. Mistaken in both sir, neither fair, nor Maid.

Comp. No ? a married woman.

Wife. That's it I was sir, a poor widdow now.

Comp. A widdow ? Nay then I must make a little bold with
you, 'tis a kin to mine own case, I am a wifeless husband too, how
long have you been a widow pray ? nay, do not weep.

Wife. I cannot chuse to think the loss I had.

Comp. He was an honest man to thee it seems.

Wife. Honest quoth, a,oh... Comp. By my feck, and those
are great losses , an honest man is not to be found in every hole,
nor every street , if I took a whole parish in sometimes I might
say true, for stincking Mackarel may be cried for new.

Ray. Some what sententious.

Eust. Oh, silence was an Article enjoyned.

Comp. And how long is it since you lost your honest hus-
band ? Wife. Oh the memory is too fresh, and your sight makes
my sorrow double. Comp. My sight ? why was he like me ?

Wife. Your left hand to your right, is not more like.

Comp. Nay then I cannot blame thee to weep , an honest man
I warrant him , and thou hadst a great los's of him ; such a pro-
portion, so limb'd, so coloured, so fed.

Ray. Yes faith, and so taught too.

Eust. Nay, will you break the Law ?

Wife. Twins were never liker.

Comp. Well, I love him the better, whatsoever is become of
him, and how many children did he leave thee at his departure ?

Wife. Onely one sir.

Comp. A Boy, or a Girl ?

Wife. A Boy, Sir.

Comp. Just mine one case still : my wife, rest her soul, left me a

A Care for a Cuckold.

Boy too, a chopping Boy I warrant.

Wife. Yes if you call 'em so.

Comp. I, mine is a chopping Boy, I mean to make either a Cook or a Butcher of him, for those are your chopping Boys. And what profession was your husband of?

Wife. He went to Sea, sir, and there got his living.

Comp. Mine own faculty too, and you can like a man of that profession well?

Wife. For his sweet sake whom I so dearly loved, more dearly lost, I must think well of it.

Comp. Must you? I do think then thou must venter to Sea once agen, if thoul't be rul'd by me.

Wife. Oh Sir, but there's one thing more burdensome to us, then most of others wives, which moves me a little to distaste it, long time we endure the absence of our husbands, sometimes many years, and then if any slip in woman be, as long vacations may make Lawyers hungry, and Tradesmen cheaper penny-worths afford, (then otherwise they would for ready coin) scandals fly out, and we poor souls branded with wanton living, and incontinency, when alas (consider) can we do withal?

Comp. They are fools, and not saylors that do not consider that, I'm sure your husband was not of that minde, if he were like me.

Wife. No indeed, he would bear kinde and honestly.

Comp. He was the wiser, alack your land and fresh-water men never understand what wonders are done at Sea; yet They may observe a shore, that a Hen having tasted The Cock, kill him, and she shall lay Eggs afterwards.

Wife. That's very true indeed.

Comp. And so may women, why not? may not a man get two or three children at once? One must be born before another, you know.

Wife. Even this discretion my sweet husband had: You more and more resemble him.

Comp. Then if they knew what things are done at sea, where The Winds themselves do copulate, and bring forth issue, As thus: In the old world there were but four in all, As Nor, East, Sou, and West: these dwelt far from one another;

Yet

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Yet by meeting they have engendred Nor-East, Sou-East,
Sou-West, Nor-West, then they were eight ; Of them
Were begotten Nor-Nor-East, Nor-Nor-West, Sou-Sou-East,
Sou-Sou-West, and those two Sows were Sou-East and Sou-West
Daughters, and indeed there is a family now of 32 of 'em,
That they have fill'd every corner of the world, and yet for
All this, you see these baudy Bellows-menders when they
Come ashore, will be offering to take up Womens coats
In the street.

Wife. Still my husbands discretion !

Comp. So I say, if your Land-men did understand that we send
Windes from Sea, to do our commendations to our wives, they
would not blame you as they do.

Wife. We cannot help it.

Comp. But you shall help it. Can you love me, widow ?

Wife. If I durst confess what I do think, sir,
I know what I would say.

Comp. Durst confess ? Why whom do you fear ? here's none
but honest Gentlemen my friends ; let them hear, and
Never blush for't.

Wife. I shall be thought too weak to yeild at first.

Ray. Tush, that's niceness ; come, we heard all the rest,
The first true stroke of love sinks thee deepest,
If you love him, say so.

Comp. I have a Boy of mine own, I tell you that afore-hand,
You shall not need to fear me that way.

Wife. Then I do love him.

Comp. So here will be man and wife to morrow then, what though
We meet strangers, we may love one another
Ne'r the worse for that. Gentlemen, I invite
You all to my Wedding.

Omnis. We'll all attend it.

Comp. Did not I tell you, I would fetch it off fair, let any
Man lay a Cuckold to my charge, if he dares now.

Ray. 'Tis slander who ever does it.

Comp. Nay, it will come to *Petty Lassery* at least, and without
Compass of the general pardon too, or I'll bring him to a
Foul sheet, if he has ne're a clean one, or let me

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Hear him that will say I am not father to the childe I begot:

Eust. None will adventure any of those.

Comp. Or that my wife that shall be, is not as honest a woman, as some other mens wives are?

Ray. No question of that.

Comp. How fine and sleek my brows are now?

Eust. I when you are married, they'll come to themselves agen.

Comp. You may call me Bridegroom if you please now,
For the Guests are bidden.

Omnis. Good Master Bridegroom.

Comp. Come Widow then, ere the next Ebb and Tide,
If I be Bridegroom, thou shalt be the Bride.

Exeunt.

Finis Actus quartii.

ACT. 5. SCENE 1.

Enter Rochfield and Annabel.

Roch. Believe me, I was never more ambitious, or covetous, if
I may call it so, of any fortune greater than this one,
but to behold his face.

Ann. And now's the time; for from a much feared danger as
I heard, he's late come over.

Roch. And not seen you yet? 'tis some unkindness.

Ann. You may think it so; but for my part, sir, I account it
none: what know I but some business of import and weighty con-
sequence, more near to him than any formal Complement to me,
may for a time detain him: I presume no jealousie can be asperst
on him, for which he cannot well Apology.

Roch. You are a Creature every way compleat,
As good a Wife, as Woman; so whose sake
As I in duty am endeer'd to you,
So shall I owe him service.

Enter Lessinghams.

Less. The ways to Love, and Crowns, lye both through blood,
for in 'em both all Lets must be removed; it could be stiled no
true ambition else. I am grown big with project: Project, said I?
Rather with sudden mischief; which without

A spe-

A Cure for a Cuckold.

A speedy birth fills me with painful throwes,
And I am now in labor. Thanks occasion
That givest me a fit ground to work upon,
It should be *Rochfield*, one since our departure
It seems ingrafted in this Family:

Indeed the Houses Minion, since from the Lord
To the lowest Groom, all with unite consent
Speak him so largely. Nor as it appears
By this their private Conference, is he grown
Least in the Brides opinion. A foundation
On which I will erect a brave Revenge.

Ann. Sir, What kinde Offices lyes in your way
To do for him, I shall be thankful for,
And reckon them mine own.

Roch. In acknowledgement I kiss your hand, so with a grati-
tude never to be forgot, I take my leave.

Ann. I mine of you, with hourly expectation
Of a long lookt for husband.

Exit.

Roch. May it thrive according to your wishes.

Less. Now's my turn. Without offence, Sir, may I beg your
name?

Roch. 'Tis that I never yet denied to any, nor will to you that
seem a Gentleman: 'tis *Rochfield*.

Less. *Rochfield*? You are then the man whose nobleness, ver-
tue, valor, and good parts, have voice'd you loud. *Dover* and
Sandwich, *Marget*, and all the Coast is full of you: but more,
as an Eye-witness of all these, and with most truth, the Master
of this house hath given them large expressions.

Roch. Therein his love exceeded much my merit.

Less. That's your modesty:

Now I as one that goodness love in all men,
And honoring that which is but found in few,
Desire to know you better.

Roch. Pray your name?

Less. *Lessingham.* *Roch.* A friend to Mr. *Bonvile*?

Less. In the number of those which he esteems most dear to
him, he reckons me not last.

Roch. So I have heard.

Less.

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Less. Sir, you have cause to bless the lucky Planet
Beneath which you were born, 'twas a bright Star
And then shined cleer upon you, for as you
Are every way well parted, so I hold you
In all designs mark't to be fortunate.

Roch. Pray do not stretch your love to flattery,
I may call it then in question; grow I pray you
To some particulars.

Less. I have observed but late your parting with the Virgin
Bride, and therein some affection. *Roch.* How?

Less. With pardon, in this I still applaud your happiness, and
praise the blessed influence of your stars: for how can it be pos-
sible that she, unkindly left upon the Bride-day, and disappointed
of those Nuptial sweets that night expected, but should take the
occasion so fairly offered? Nay, and stand excused aswell in de-
testation of a scorn, scarce in a husband heard of, as selecting a
Gentleman in all things so compleat, to do her those neglected
offices, her youth and beauty justly challengeth.

Roch. Some plot to wrong the Bride, and I now
Will marry Craft with Cunning, if he'l bite,
I'll give him line to play on: wer't your case
You being young as I am, would you intermit
So fair and sweet occasion?

Less. Yet mis-conceive me not, I do intreat you;
To think I can be of that easie wit,
Or of that malice to defame a Lady,
Were she so kinde so to expose her self,
Nor is she such a creature.

Less. On this foundation I can build higher still, (sir I beleiv't)
I hear you two call Cousins; comes your kindred
By the Woodroffs, or the Bonviles?

Roch. From neither, 'tis a word of courtesie
Late interchanged betwixt us, otherwise
We are forreign as two strangers. *Less.* Better still.

Roch. I would not have you grow too inward with me
Upon so small a knowledge; yet to satisfie you;
And in some kinde too to delight my self,
Those Bracelets and the Carckanet she wears,

A Cure for a Cuckold.

She gave me once.

Less. They were the first, and special Tokens past betwixt her and her husband.

Roch. 'Tis confess: what I have said, I have said: Sir, you have power perhaps to wrong me, or to injure her; this you may do, but as you are a Gentleman I hope you will do neither.

Less. Trust upon't.

Exit Rochfield.

Enter Woodroff.

If I drown I'll sink some along with me;
For of all miseries I hold that chief,
Wretched to be, when none co-parts our grief.
Here's another Anvile to work on: I must now
Make this my Master-piece; for your old Foxes
Are seldom ta'ne in Springes.

Wood. What, my Friend!

You are happily returned; and yet I want
Somewhat to make it perfect: Where's your Friend,
My Son in Law?

Less. Oh sir!

Wood. I pray sir resolve me; for I do suffer strangely till I know if he be in safety.

Less. Fare you well: 'Tis not fit
I should relate his danger.

Wood. I must know't: I have a Quarrel to you already, for enticing my Son in Law to go over: Tell me quickly, or I shall make it greater.

Less. Then truth is, he's dangerously wounded.

Wood. But he's not dead I hope?

Less. No sir, not dead; yet sure your daughter may take liberty to chuse another.

Wood. Why that gives him dead.

Less. Upon my life Sir, no; your son's in health
As well as I am.

Wood. Strange! you deliver Riddles.

Less. I told you he was wounded, and 'tis true,
He is wounded in his Reputation.

I told you likewise, which I am loth to repeat,
That your fair Daughter might take liberty
To embrace another. That's the consequence
That makes my best Friend wounded in his Fame.

This

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Wood. This is all I can deliver.

Wood. I must have more of't ;
For I do sweat already , and Ile sweat more ;
'Tis good they say to cure Aches ; and o'th sudden
I am sore from head to foot, let me taste the worst.

Less. Know Sir, if ever there were truth in falsehood,
Then 'tis most true , your Daughter plays most false
With *Bonvile* , and hath chose for her Favorite
The man that now past by me, *Rochfield*.

Wood. Say ? I would thou hadst spoke this on *Cattis-sands*,
And I within my Sword and Poniards length
Of that false throat of thine, I pray sir, tell me
Of what Kin or Alliance do you take me
To the Gentlewoman you late mentioned?

Less. You are her Father.

Wood. Why then of all men living, do you address
This Report to me, that ought of all men breathing
To have been the last o'th Rowl, except the husband,
That should have heard of't ?

Less. For her honor Sir, and yours ;
That your good Council may reclaim her.

Wood. I thank you.

Less. She has departed sir, upon my knowledge,
With Jewels, and with Bracelets, the first Pledges,
And confirmation of th' unhappy Contract
Between her self and husband.

Wood. To whom? Less. To *Rochfield*.

Wood. Be not abused : but now,
Even now I saw her wear e'm.

Less. Very likely ; 'tis fit, hearing her husband is returned,
That she should re-deliver 'em.

Wood. But pray sir tell me ,
How is it likely she could part with 'em,
When they are lockt about her Neck and Wrists,
And the Key with her husband ?

Less. Oh sir, that's but practise ;
She has got a trick to use another Key
Besides her husbands.

Wood.

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Wood. Sirrah, you do lie;
And were I to pay down a hundred pounds
For every Lie given, as men pay Twelve pence,
And worthily, for Swearing, I would give thee
The Lie, nay though it were in the Court of Honor
So oft, till of the Thousands I am worth,
I had not left a hundred. For is't likely
So brave a Gentleman as *Rochfield* is,
That did so much at Sea to save my life,
Should now on Land shorten my wretched days,
In ruining my Daughter? A rank Lie!
Have you spread this to any but my self?

Less. I am no Intelligencer.

Wood. Why then 'tis yet a secret?
And that it may rest so, Draw; Ile take order
You shall prate of it no further.

Less. Oh, my Sword
Is enchanted, Sir, and will not out o'th Scabbard:
I will leave you, sir; yet say not I give ground,
For 'tis your own you stand on. Enter *Bonvile & Clare*.
Clare here with *Bonvile*? excellent! on this
I have more to work. This goes to *Annabel*,
And it may increase the Whirlwinde. Exit.

Bon. How now, Sir? Come, I know this choler bred in you
For the Voyage which I took at his entreaty;
But I must reconcile you.

Wood. On my credit
There's no such matter. I will tell you Sir,
And I will tell it in laughter: The Cause of it
Is so poor, so ridiculous, so impossible
To be believed! Ha, ha, he came even now
And told me that one *Rochfield*, now a Guest
(And most worthy Sir, to be so) in my House,
Is grown exceedingly familiar with my Daughter.

Bon. Ha?

Wood. Your wife, and that he has had favors from her.

Bon. Favors?

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Love-tokens I did call 'em in my youth ;
Lures to which Gallants spread their wings, and stoop
In Ladies bosoms. Nay, he was so false
To Truth and all good Manners, that those Jewels
You lockt about her Neck, he did protest
She had given to *Rochfield* ? Ha ! methinks o'th sudden
You do change colour. Sir, I would not have you.
Believe this in least part : My Daughter's honest,
And my Guess is a noble Fellow : And for this
Slander deliver'd me by *Lessingham*,
I would have cut his throat.

Bon. As I your Daughters,
If I finde not the Jewels 'bout her.

Clare. Are you returned ?
With the Italian Plague upon you, Jealousie ?
Wood. Suppose that *Lessingham* should love my Daughter,
And thereupon fashion your going over,
As now your Jealousie, the stronger way
So to divide you, there were a fine Crotchet !
Do you stagger still ? If you continue thus, Enter *Rochfield*
I vow you are not worth a welcome home and *Annabel*
Neither from her, nor me. See, here she comes.

Clare. I have brought you home a Jewel.

Ann. Wear it your self ;
For these I wear are Fetters, not Favors.

Clare. I lookt for better welcome.

Roch. Noble sir, I must woe your better knowledge ?

Bon. Oh dear sir,
My Wife will bespeak it for you.

Roch. Ha ? your Wife.

Wood. Bear with him, sir, he's strangely off o'th hinges.

Bon. The Jewels are i'th right place ; but the Jewel
Of her heart sticks yonder. You are angry with me
For my going over.

Ann. Happily more angry for your coming over.

Bon. I sent you my Will from *Dover* ?

Ann. Yes Sir. *Bon.* Fetch it.

Ann.

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Ann. I shall Sir, but leave your Self-will with you.

Exit.

VVood. This is fine, the woman will be mad too.

Bon. Sir, I would speak with you.

Roch. And I with you of all men living.

Bon. I must have satisfaction from you.

Roch. Sir, it growes upon the time of payment.

Wood. What's that? what's that? Ile have no whispering.

Enter Annabel with a Will.

An. Look you, there's the Pattent
Of your deadly affection to me.

Bon. 'Tis wellcome,
When I gave my self for dead, I then made over
My Land unto you, now I finde your love
Dead to me, I will alter't.

An. Use your pleasure,
A man may make a garment for the Moon,
Rather then fit your Constancy.

Wood. How's this? Alter your Will.

Bon. 'Tis in mine own disposing,
Certainly I will alter't.

Wood. Will you so my friend?
Why then I will alter mine too.
I had estated thee, thou peevish fellow,
In forty thousand pounds after my death,
I can finde another Executor.

Bon. Pray sir, do,
Mine Ile alter without question.

Wood. Doest hear me?
And if I change not mine within this two hours,
May my Executors cozen all my kindred
To whom I bequeath Legacies.

Bon. I am for a Lawyer, sir.

VVood. And I will be with one as soon as thy self,
Though thou ridest poste to th' devil.

Roch. Stay let me follow, and cool him.

VVood. Oh by no means,
You'l put a quarrel upon him for the wrong,

A Cure for a Cuckold.

H'as done my Daughter.

Roch. No believe it sir, he's my wisht friend.

Wood. Oh come, I know the way of't ;
Carry it like a French quarrel, privately whisper
Appoint to meet, and cut each others throats
With Cringes and Embraces , I protest
I will not suffer you exchange a word
Without I over hear't.

Roch. Use your pleasure.

Exit Woodroff, Rochfield.

Clare. You are like to make fine work now.

An. Nay, you are like to make a finer businesse of't.

Clare. Come, come, I must sowder you together.

An. You? why I heard

A bird sing lately, you are the onely cause
Works the division.

Clare. Who ? As thou ever lovedst me,
For I long, though I am a Maid, for't.

An. Lessingham.

Clare. Why then I do protest my self first cause
Of the wrong, which he has put upon you both,
Which please you to walk in, I shall make good
In a short relation ; come I'll be the clew
To lead you forth this Labyrinth, this toy-l
Of a supposed and causeless Jealousie.
Cankers touch choicest fruit with their infection,
And Fevers seize those of the best complexion.

Exsunt.

Enter Woodroff and Rochfield.

Wood. Sir, have I not said I love you ? if I have,
You may believ't before an Oracle,
For there's no trick in't, but the honest fence.

Roch. Believe it, that I do, sir.

Wood. Your love must then

Be as plain with mine, that they may suit together :
I say you must not fight with my son *Bonvile*.

Roch. Not fight with him, sir ?

Wood No , Not fight with him, sir.
I grant you may be wronged; and I dare swear

A Cure for a Cuckold.

So is my childe, but he is the husband, you know,
The womans lord, and must not always be told
Of his faults neither, I say you must not fight.

Roch. Ile swear it, if you please sir.

Wood. And forswear I know't

E're you lay ope the secrets of your valour,
'Tis enough for me I saw you whisper,
And I know what belongs to't.

Roch. To no such end; assure you:

Enter Lessingham.

Wood. I say you cannot fight with him.

If you be my friend, for I must use you,
Yonder's my foe, and you must be my Second,
Prepare the Slanderer, and get another
Better then thy self too ; for here's my Second,
One that will ferch him up, and fierk him too.
Get your tools, I know the way to *Callis-sands*,
If that be your Fence-school, hee'l show you tricks 'faith,
Hee'l let blood your Calumny, your best guard
Will come to a *Peccavi* I believe.

Less. Sir, if that be your quarrel,
He's a party in it, and must maintain
The side with me; from him I collected
All those Circumstances concern your Daughter,
His own tongue's confession.

Wood. Who from him ?

He will belie to do thee a pleasure then,
If he speak any ill upon himself,
I know he ne're could do an injury.

Roch. So please you, Ile relate it, sir.

Enter Bonvile, Annabel, Clare.

Wood. Before her husband then, and here he is
In friendly posture with my Daughter too ;
I like that well. Son Bridegroom, and Lady Bride,
If you will hear a man defame himself,
(For so he must if he say any ill,) then listen.

Bon. Sir, I have heard this story, and meet with your opinion in his goodness, the repitition will be needless.

Roch.

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Roch. Your father has not, Sir. I'll be brief in the delivery.

VVood. Do, do then, I long to hear it.

Roch. The first acquaintance I had with your Daughter,
Was on the Wedding-Eve.

VVood. So, 'tis not ended yet, methinks;

Roch. I would have robb'd her. *VVood.* Ah, thief.

Roch. That Chain and Bracelet which she wears upon her, she
ransom'd with the full esteem in Gold, which was with you my
Venture. *VVood.* Ah, thief agen.

Roch. For any attempt against her honor, I vow I had no
Thought on. *VVood.* An honest thief' faith yet.

Roch. Which she as nobly recompenc'd, brought me home,
And in her own discretion thought it meet,
For cover of my shame, to call me Cousin.

VVood. Call a thief Cousin? Why, and so she might,
For the Gold she gave thee, she stole from her husband,
'Twas all his now, yet 'twas a good Girl too.

Roch. The rest you know, sir.

VVood. Which was worth all the rest, thy valor Lad; but I'll
have that in Print, because I can no better utter it.

Roch. Thus (Jade unto my Wants, and spurred by my Neces-
sities) I was going, but by that Ladies council I was staid; (for
that Discourse was our familiarity.) And this you may take for
my Recantation, I am no more a thief.

VVood. A blessing on thy heart,
And this was the first time I warrant thee too.

Roch. Your charitable Censure is not wrong'd in that.

VVood. No, I knew 't could be but the first time at most;
But for thee (brave Valor) I have in store,
That thou shalt need to be a thief no more.

Soft Musick. Ha? What's this Musick?

Bon. It chimes a Fopean to your Wedding, sir, if this be your
Bride.

Less. Can you forgive me? some wilde distractions had over-
turned my own condition, and spilt the goodness you once knew
in me, but I have carefully recovered it, and overthrown the fury
on't. *Clare.* It was my cause that you were so possest, and all
these

A Cure for a Cuckold.

these troubles have from my peevish will original : I do repent, though you forgive me not.

Leſſ. You have no need for your repentance then which is due to it : all's now as at first it was wiſht to be.

Wood. Why, that's well said of all sides. But soft, this Musick has some other meaning : Another Wedding towards, Good speed, good speed.

Enter Compass and the four Gallants, Bride between Franckford and another, Luce, Nurse, and Childe.

Comp. We thank you, sir.

Wood. Stay, stay, our neighbor *Compass*, is't not ?

Comp. That was, and may be agen to morrow, this day Master Bridegroom.

Wood. Oh ! give you joy. But sir, if I be not mistaken, you were married before now ; how long is't since your wife died ?

Comp. Ever since yesterday, sir.

Wood. Why, she's scarce buried yet then.

Comp. No indeed, I mean to dig her grave soon, I had no leisure yet. *Wood.* And was not your fair Bride married before ?

Wife. Yes indeed, sir. *Wood.* And how long since your husband departed ? *Wife.* Just when my husbands wife died.

Wood. Bless us *Hymen*, are not theie both the same parties ?

Bon. Most certain, sir. *Wood.* What Marriage call you this ?

Comp. This is called *Shedding of Horns*, sir. *VWood.* How ?

Leſſ. Like enough, but they may grow agen next year.

VWood. This is a new trick. *Comp.* Yes sir, because we did not like the old trick. *VWood.* Brother, you are a helper in this design too. *Fr.* The Father to give the Bride, sir.

Comp. And I am his son, sir, and all the sons he has ; and this is his Grand-childe, and my elder brother, you'l think this strange now. *Wood.* Then it seems he begat this before you ?

Comp. Before me ? not so sir, I was far enough off when 'twas done ; yet let me see him dares say, this is not my Childe, and this my father. *Bon.* You cannot see him here, I think sir.

Wood. Twice married ! Can it hold ?

Comp. Hold ? It should hold the better, a wise man would think, when 'tis ty'd of two knots.

Wood.

A Cure for a Cuckold.

Wood. Methinks it should rather unloose the first,
And between 'em both make up one Negative.

Eust. No sir, for though it hold on the contrary, yet two Affirmatives make no Negative. Wood. Cry you mercy, sir.

Comp. Make what you will, this little Negative was my wifes laying, and I Affirm it to be mine own.

Wood. This proves the marriage before substantial, having this issue

Comp. 'Tis mended now sir; for being double married, I may now have two children at a birth, if I can get 'em. D'ye think Ile be five years about one, as I was before?

Eust. The like has bin done for the loss of the Wedding-ring, And to settle a new peace before disjoyned.

Lyon. But this indeed sir, was especially done, to avoid the word of Scandal, that foul word which the fatal Monologist cannot alter. Wood. Cuckow! Comp. What's that, the Nightingale? Wood. A Night-bird, much good may do you, sir.

Comp. Ile thank you when I'm at Supper. Come Father, Childe, and Bride; and for your part Father, whatsoever he, or he, or t'other says, you shall be as welcome as in my t'other wifes days.

Fr. I thank you, sir.

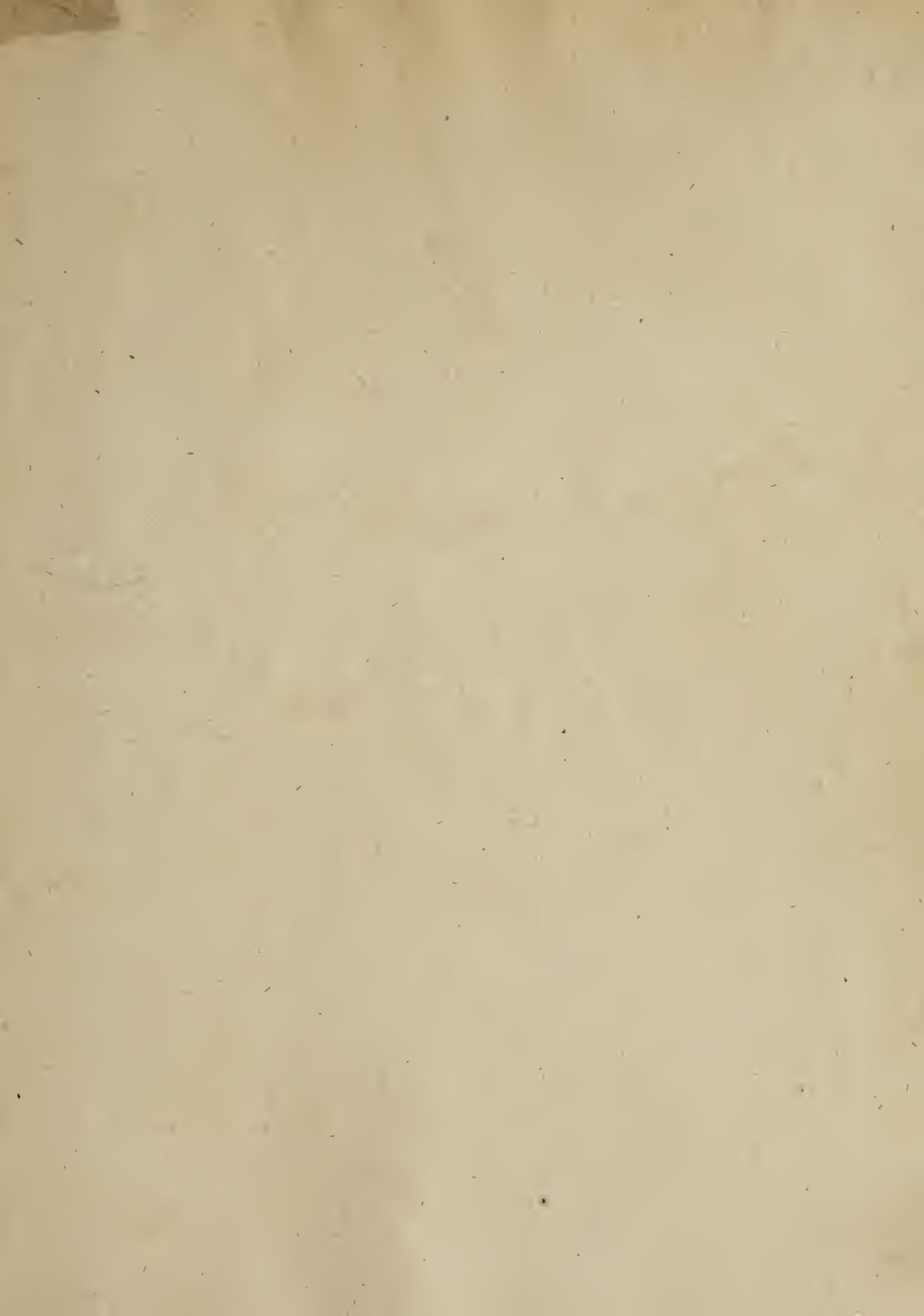
Wood. Nay, take us with you, Gentlemen:
One Wedding we haye yet to solemnize,
The first is still imperfect. Such troubles
Have drown'd our Musick: but now I hope all's friends.
Get you to Bed, and there the Wedding ends.

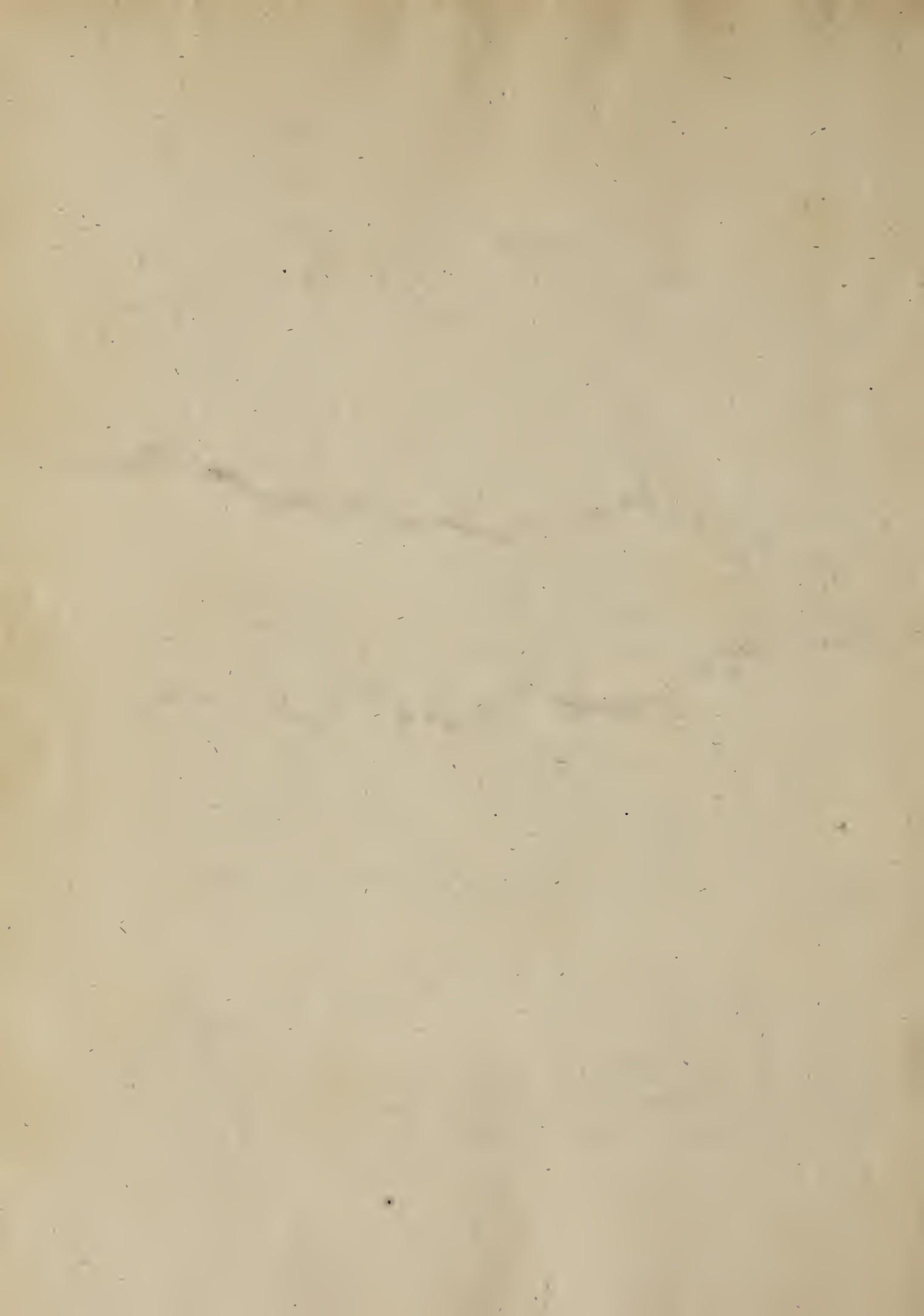
Comp. And so good night, my Bride and Ile to bed:
He that has Horns, thus let him learn to shed.

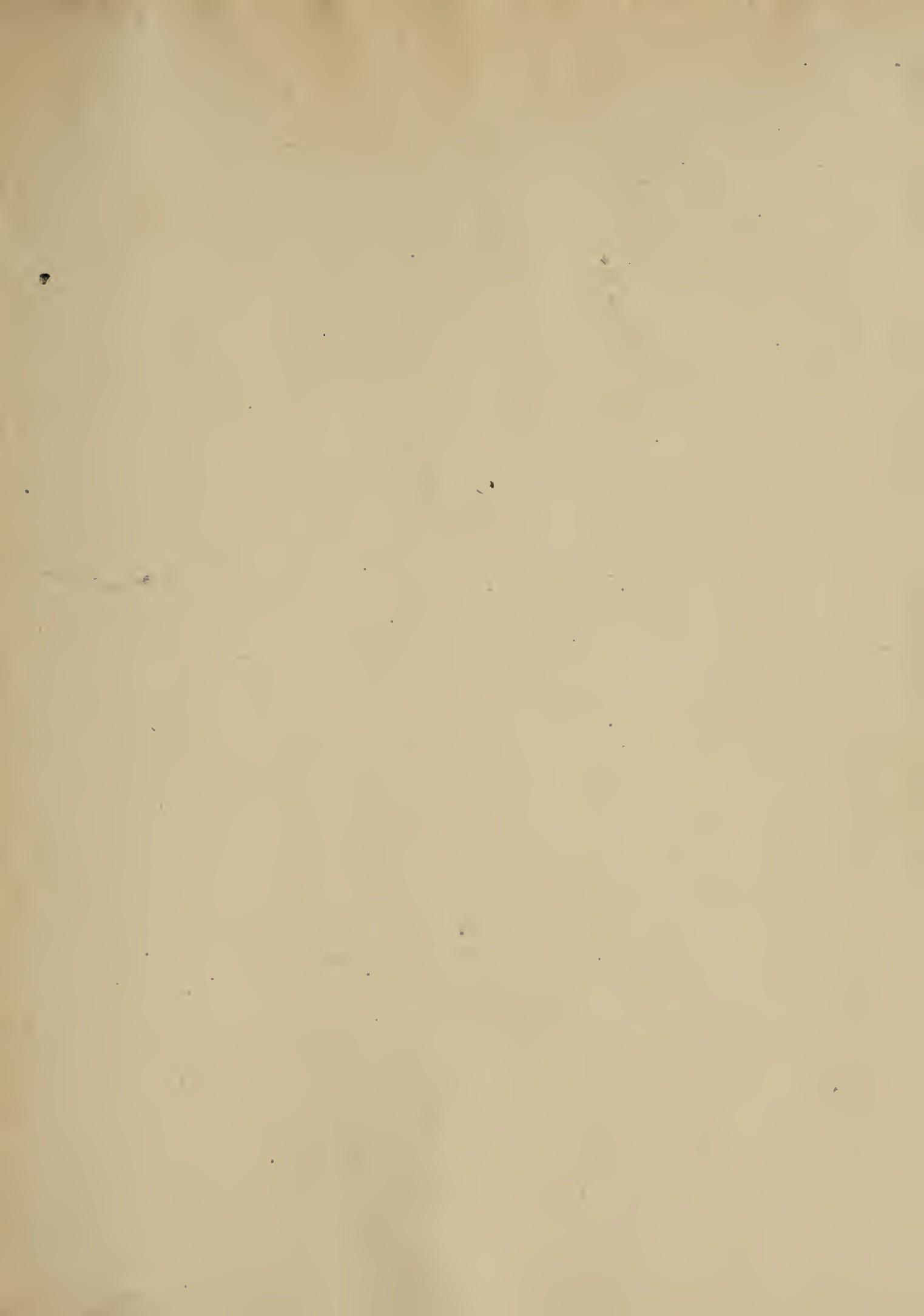
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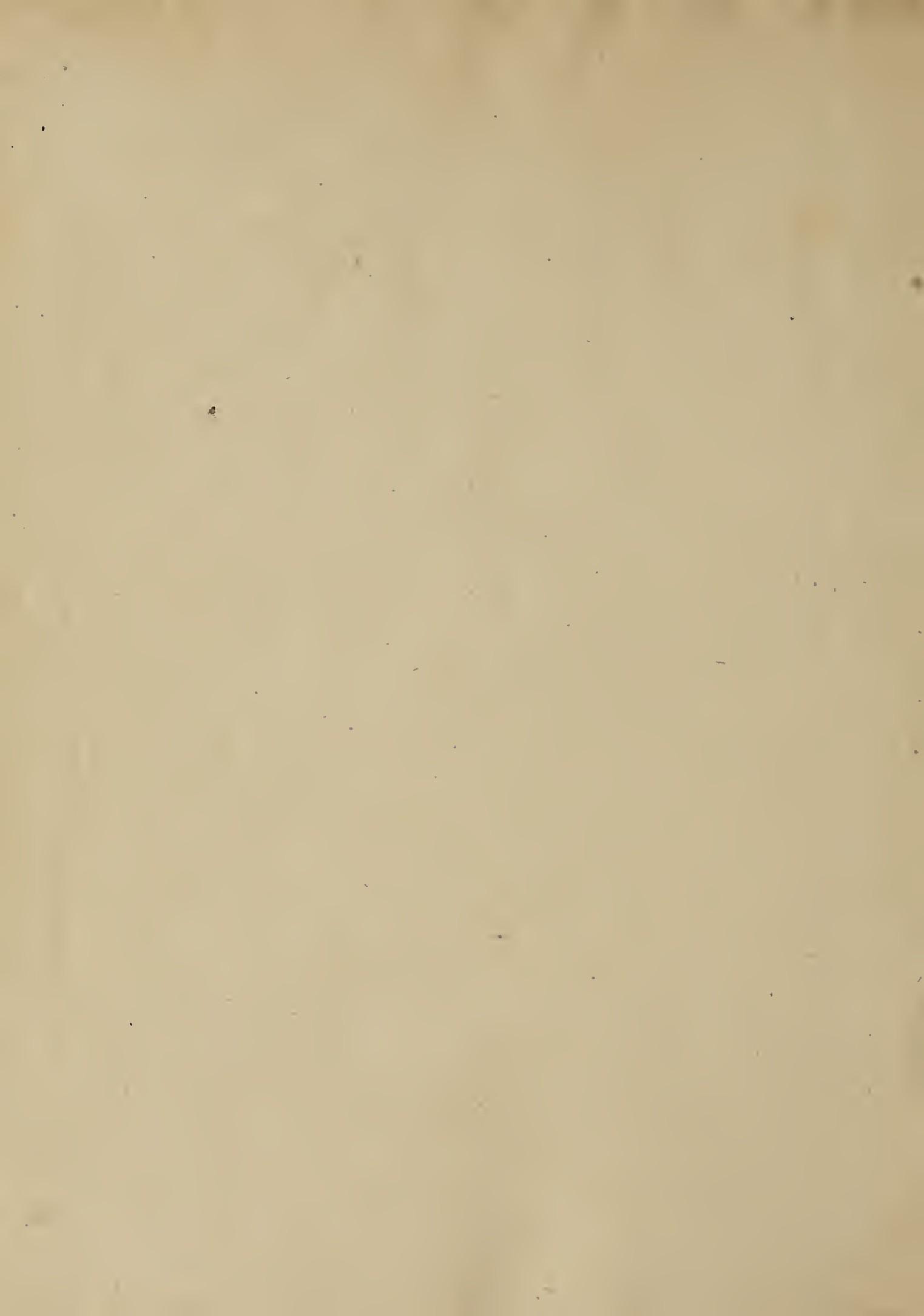
F I N I S.

If any Gentlemen please to repair to my House aforesaid, they may be furnished with all manner of English, or French Histories, Romances, or Poetry; which are to be sold, or read for reasonable Considerations.









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